

# ROM

MAGAZINE OF THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

volume 40:number 1

2007 summer

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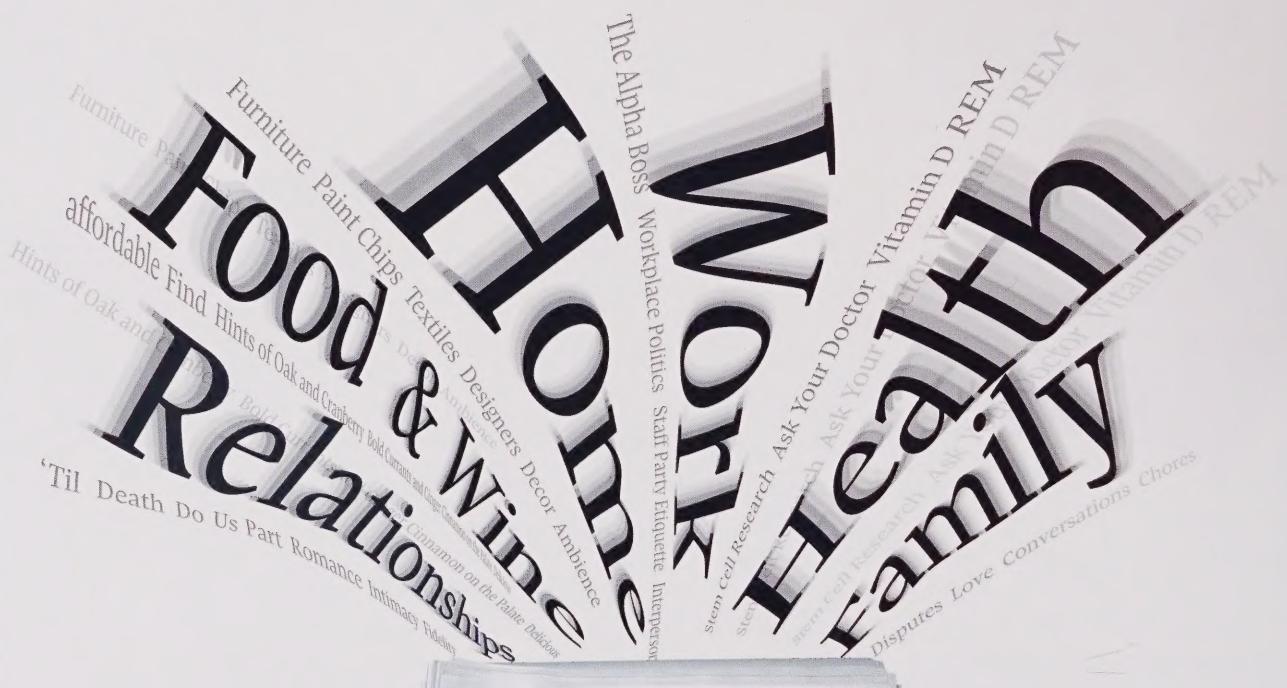
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# Our relationship with the ROM has crystallized

Just as crystals take distinct shape over time, so has CIBC's relationship with the Royal Ontario Museum.

CIBC has always been proud of its support of the ROM, from our partnership with the Museum's inception in 1912 to its renaissance in 2003 with the creation of the CIBC Discovery Gallery. Now, we are proud to add a new facet to our relationship as the Inaugural Season Sponsor of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

Over the coming months, the Crystal will see world cultures and natural history emerge in ways never before seen. As part of our commitment to cultivating strong, vibrant communities, CIBC is very proud to continue our support of the ROM, and to share in what is yet to come.



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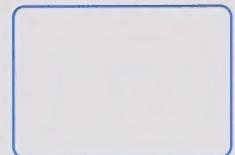
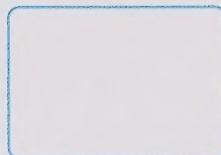


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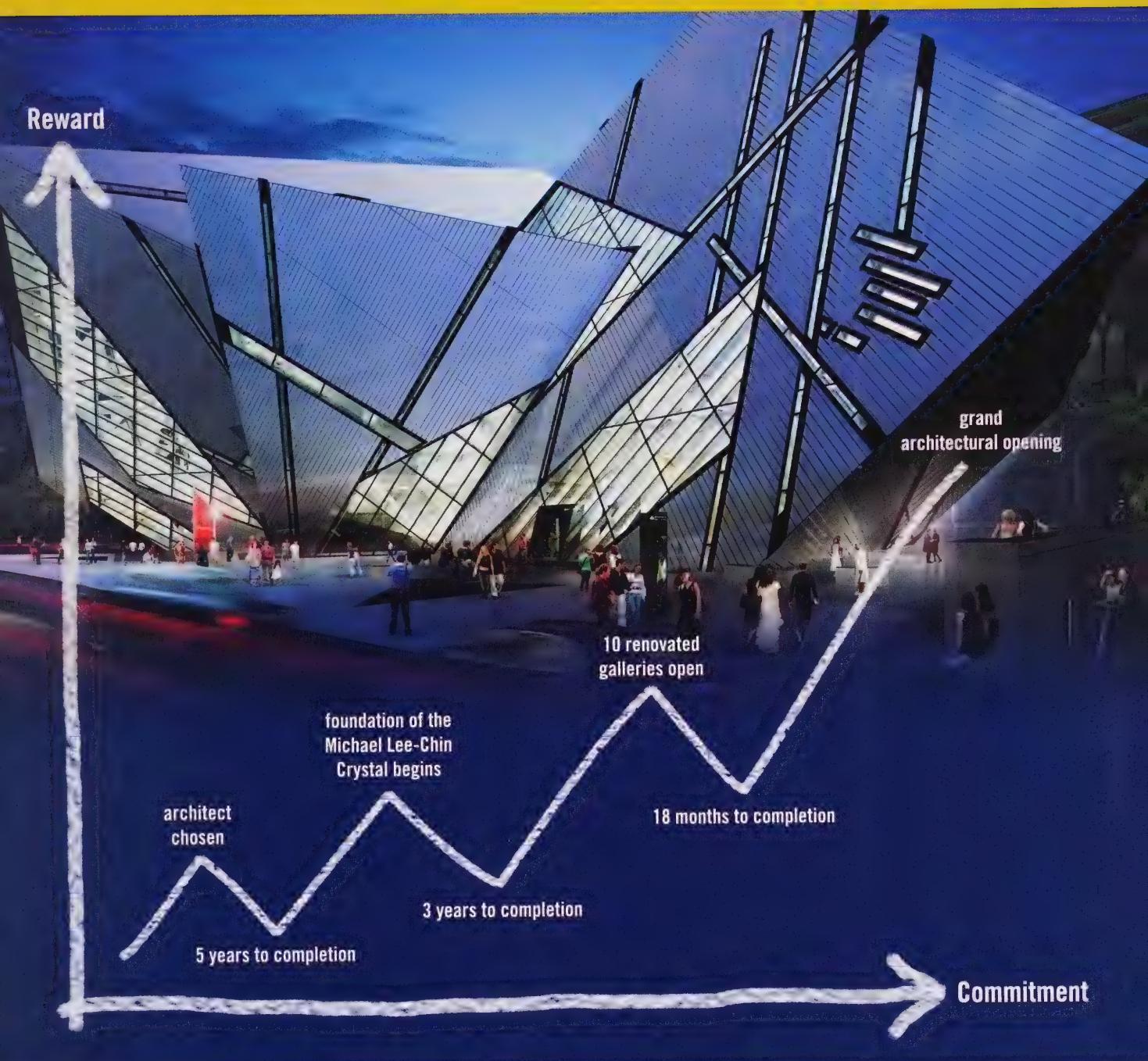
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Detail of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. Photo by Brian Boyle, ROM



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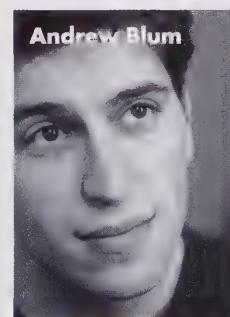
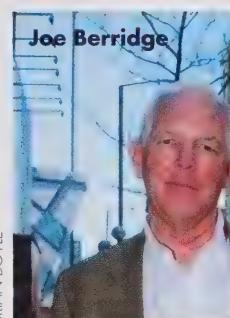
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## Larry Wayne Richards

As dean of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Architecture, Landscape, and Design from 1997 to 2004, Larry Wayne Richards served on U of T's Design Review Committee and was instru-

mental in selecting cutting-edge architects for campus buildings. Richards continues to teach at U of T and has a design consulting practice with projects in Hong Kong, New York, and Louisiana. "Writing about the ROM has been intriguing: the sweeping changes there parallel many of my own interests—the urban "collaging" of historic buildings with exhilarating new structures, the energizing of public space, and the recharging of how people experience museums."

## Joe Berridge

Joe Berridge is an urban planner and partner with Urban Strategies Inc. Based in Toronto, he is working in many cities around the world that are trying to re-invent themselves through the dramatic rebuilding of their cultural institutions. It's a high-risk venture, but Toronto just might have the best chance of success.

## Bruce Kuwabara

Bruce Kuwabara is a founding partner of Kuwabara Payne McKenna Architects (KPMB), one of Toronto's leading architectural practices.

He lives in the Annex with his wife, Victoria Jackman, and their young children, Thomas and Vita, who both love visiting the ROM. Kuwabara has watched the daily progress of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal over the past few years. He is tremendously excited that Hiroshi Sugimoto has reconfigured his exhibition *History of History* for the ICC's gallery. This is precisely the kind of response Kuwabara expects the new galleries in the Lee-Chin Crystal to inspire.

## Andrew Blum

Andrew Blum writes about architecture, design, technology, urbanism, art, and travel. He lived in Canada from 2001 to 2003 while studying human geography at the University of Toronto and spent much of that time talking and thinking about the future of the city. His writing has appeared in the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, *Saturday Night*, the *Globe and Mail*, and the *National Post*. He currently lives in Brooklyn, New York, with his Canadian wife and their Canadian dog, both of whom often dream of Canada.

# CONTRIBUTORS

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The ROM's mission  
is to inspire wonder  
and build understanding  
of human cultures  
and the natural world.

**Great cities offer** the likelihood of encounters with wonder and pleasure. Such encounters may arise from a joyous crowd in a spectacular civic space on a spring day. They may well up from a concert, the theatre, the sight of an unbearably fashionable woman, or a game of hockey superbly played. Certainly, wonder and pleasure should spill from the halls of museums of art, culture, and science.

Six years ago, the ROM described its aspirations for change as Renaissance ROM, but our project always existed in the context of the city—of a broader urban renaissance. The people of the city and beyond have a right to access the world's creativity and science in public institutions of quality at every level. Museums should be one of the good habits of living in a community—not just “institutions” that serve occasional needs.

To root that habit, museums must offer both constancy in their value and variety in their appeal. The constancy comes from their permanent collections, research, and amenities. The variety comes from their special exhibitions, programs, and events. And variety should include music, film, dance, design, cuisine—the stuff of culture more broadly defined.

As the ROM unfolds over the next three years, you will see evidence of these ideas in practice. You will see the emergence of many collections and specimens that have been stranded in the Museum's vaults for generations—and new acquisitions to enrich them.

You will also see diverse temporary exhibitions ranging from biodiversity and conservation to minerals, gems, canoes, Chinese paintings, haute couture, dinosaurs, and Bauhaus design. You will see much more contemporary culture,

art, and science in dialogue with our historic collections. You will be invited to participate in debates, lectures, demonstrations, concerts, and films. And you will encounter jazz on Thursday evenings, the music and arts of many cultures on Friday nights, and special events for young people on Sunday afternoons.

You will have the opportunity to meet new people in an elegant setting that includes restaurants, lounges, and distinctive shopping. Outside on the Bloor Street Plaza, you will encounter musicians, magicians, mimes. In Daniel Libeskind's architecture, you will learn another language of space and form.

In all this we hope you will also find your own quiet places within the ROM, where you return for contemplation and solace.

Membership in the ROM allows you and your family to drop in as frequently as you wish, with no additional charges. It allows you to come by on a whim during a dull Sunday afternoon or to hang out with friends over a ROMtini and a bit of jazz in the evening. It plugs you into all the ROM's special programs and events. It gives you a subscription to the new *ROM Magazine*.

And perhaps most importantly, it gives you a personal route to support the operations of the ROM at a time of continuing government reductions, when only the community can make the difference between a place and a city.

You will find an outline of coming events and the means to join in as a member of the ROM elsewhere in this magazine. We rely on your participation. We look forward to meeting you.

*William Thorsell is director and CEO of the Royal Ontario Museum.*

ROM  
MESSAGE

# Relaxation achieved.



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# PUBLIC OPENING OF THE MICHAEL LEE-CHIN CRYSTAL

WHAT'S ON AT THE ROM

**JUNE 2, 2007**

**At sunset on Saturday, June 2, 2007**, the ROM will host an architectural opening and public dedication to mark completion of the aluminum-and-glass-covered Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. Governor General Michaëlle Jean will officially open the Museum's dramatic new addition designed by Daniel Libeskind, giving the public their first chance to see inside the five interlocking prisms that form its architecture.

"The Museum is deeply grateful to Michael Lee-Chin—who gave a \$30-million lead gift—for making this building possible," notes William Thorsell, ROM director and CEO. "It confirms the ROM as being among the country's premier cultural destinations, providing a dramatic new place for contemplation, learning, and fun."

Free opening-day festivities begin at 8 pm on the new Bloor Street Plaza in front of the Lee-Chin Crystal with *A World of Possibilities*, a 75-minute live concert with star performances on three stages emceed by Paul Gross, famed for his role in *Due South*. The public event is first-come first-served. The lineup includes pop singer Deborah Cox, Metropolitan Opera star Isabel Bayrakdarian, and environmentalist David Suzuki. Multi-Grammy award-winning David Foster has composed and will conduct a number specifically for this special occasion. The show culminates in a spectacular illumination of the building's façade. Afterwards, the Museum's doors will be opened, with free public admission—available by timed ticket—offered overnight and throughout Sunday, June 3, until 6 pm.

Until June 10, enthusiasts of contemporary design have a once-in-a-lifetime chance to enjoy Libeskind's sloping walls and soaring volumes in their purest form, when most of the gallery spaces remain empty. After the 10th, gallery areas in the Lee-Chin Crystal will close temporarily for the sequential installation of seven permanent galleries on four floors.

The spaces listed at left will be open June 2.

#### LEVEL 1

- **Spirit House**, an evocative void at the heart of the building traversed by criss-crossing bridges
- **Hyacinth Gloria Chen Crystal Court**, a four-storey atrium, where the new Membership Desk will be located
- **Stair of Wonders**, a grand staircase and cabinet of curiosities in one
- **ROM Museum Store**, which includes ROM reproductions among its offerings

#### LEVEL 1B

- **FOOD STUDIO ROM Fresh Market Eatery**, a family-oriented dining space

#### LEVEL 2B

- **Garfield Weston Exhibition Hall**, featuring its inaugural exhibition *Drama and Desire: Japanese Paintings from the Floating World, 1690–1850*  
(see page 20 for details)

#### LEVEL 4

- **Institute for Contemporary Culture (ICC) Gallery**, featuring its inaugural exhibition *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*  
(see pages 18 and 80 for details)
- **C5 Restaurant Lounge** to open late June

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# HIROSHI SUGIMOTO: HISTORY OF HISTORY

**OPENING IN JUNE 2007**

**INAUGURAL SHOW IN THE ICC'S NEW GALLERY**

Matching the drama of the Institute for Contemporary Culture's new gallery space atop the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal is its inaugural exhibition *Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*. The show, curated by artist Hiroshi Sugimoto, spans time and history with more than 50 artworks, including contemporary photographs by Sugimoto, beautiful historical Asian artifacts, and unique natural specimens from the artist's personal collection.



IMAGE COURTESY HIROSHI SUGIMOTO

*Morning Sun Illumes the Waves*, 1999.

*By photographing these fossils in turn, I was making another set of fossils. I came to realize that photography is a process of making fossils out of the present.*

**“Mr. Sugimoto’s** serene artworks link the historic and the contemporary, a theme that speaks to the Institute for Contemporary Culture’s (ICC) role within the Museum,” says William Thorsell, ROM director and CEO, of the ICC’s unique contemporary forum at the Museum. “The ICC’s new space will provide an impressive venue for this remarkable exhibition.” In fact, Sugimoto was so inspired by the ROM’s new architecture that he has revised his installation specifically for the ICC’s gallery, to provide a “conversation” with architect Daniel Libeskind’s vision. He has also created new work especially for this show.

Born in Tokyo in 1948, Sugimoto moved to New York City in the 1970s, where he became a dealer and collector of Japanese and East Asian art while working as an artist. Well known for his series of seascape photographs, natural history dioramas, and wax-museum figures, Sugimoto has been hailed as a star by the *Washington Post*.

Within the ICC gallery’s sloping walls, under its cathedral ceilings, Sugimoto’s presentation spans millions of years. Reflecting both art and architecture, past and present, the installation—co-organized by Japan Society (New York) and the Freer Gallery of Art & Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution (Washington, D.C.)—investigates how time is perceived and represented.

The centrepiece of the gallery, a high wall that curves through the space, displays 13th- to 18th-century Asian hanging scrolls, mandalas (symbolic circular figures representing the universe), Sutras (Buddhist scriptures), and works on paper and silk. Eleven Japanese ritual objects are displayed—among them an 8th-century miniature pagoda, originally containing

what are said to be the oldest printed texts in Japan. On the other side of the wall is a series of seven large-format gelatin prints of seascapes—photographed by Sugimoto over the past 25 years. The images were taken with an 8 x 10 inch view camera designed expressly for him.

The juxtaposition of ancient artifacts and specimens with contemporary images adds an extra dimension to the photography: the artist has described the images as “time exposed.” In one example, a 1920s or ’30s Tiffany & Co. makeup case contains a 1980 photograph, the *Japan Sea*, on one side and a 1999 image of Emperor Hirohito on the other.

A recent addition to the exhibition is a series of elegant prehistoric plant and animal fossils and geological specimens. When Sugimoto began photographing undersea dioramas of the Devonian period (350 million years ago), it occurred to him that the trilobites, squids, and sea lilies had all been re-imagined from their fossils. “By photographing these fossils in turn, I was making another set of fossils,” he notes. “I came to realize that photography is a process of making fossils out of the present.” In this section, Sugimoto again combines the prehistoric with the contemporary.

Says the artist: “Contemporary art and ancient art are like oil and water: seemingly opposite poles. Yet for the longest time now, I have found the two melding ineffably together into one, more like water and air. Living with pieces of ancient and medieval art, I have come to feel that I might borrow upon some small increment of their beauty, so as to transplant that power into my own works.”

See page 80 for an interview with Sugimoto.

## BEYOND THE EXHIBITION

### **Hiroshi Sugimoto – Daniel Libeskind: A Conversation**

The ICC celebrates its new gallery and the inaugural exhibition with an evening discussion between artist Hiroshi Sugimoto and Daniel Libeskind, lead architect for Renaissance ROM.

**Where:** Signy and Cléophée Eaton Theatre

**When:** Thursday, May 31, 2007, 6:30 to 8 pm

**Cost:** Free. Reserved seating only. To obtain tickets, check the ROM’s Web site [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca) for details.

Following this event, the ICC will unveil its gallery with a ticketed fundraising reception and private viewing with Mr. Sugimoto. Tickets are \$250 each. Check the ROM’s Web site for details.

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# DRAMA AND DESIRE: JAPANESE PAINTINGS FROM THE FLOATING WORLD, 1690-1850

JUNE 2, 2007 - AUGUST 12, 2007

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Young woman playing the samisen, 1804-1806, Japanese hanging scroll by Kitagawa Utamaro.

The world's unsurpassed collection of Japanese ukiyo-e paintings inaugurates the new Garfield Weston Exhibition Hall

**The Michael Lee-Chin Crystal's** new Garfield Weston Exhibition Hall—Canada's largest gallery for temporary international exhibitions—opens with a colourful first exhibition: *Drama and Desire: Japanese Paintings from the Floating World, 1690-1850*. The show provides an overview of ukiyo-e, a style of genre painting that developed during Japan's Edo period (1600-1868).

Drawn from the unparalleled collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, some 80 exquisite ukiyo-e paintings, screens, and hanging scrolls by major artists of the 17th to 19th centuries are on display. These works explore the iconography of the “floating world” of Yoshi-

wara—the pleasure quarters of Edo (modern-day Tokyo), which was frequented by samurai, actors, and rich patrons.

This painting style developed in Edo as the city prospered and grew into Japan's major political and commercial centre. Ukiyo-e masters explored daily activities of the city's inhabitants, detailing in particular the stylish preoccupations in the worlds of theatre and the Yoshiwara district, producing images filled with graceful geisha clad in the finest kimonos, flamboyant Kabuki theatre actors, sumo wrestlers, and samurai.

“While many institutions have ukiyo-e prints—like the ROM's, which are primarily from the Sir Edmond Walker collection—very few have paintings,” says the

ROM's Dr. Ka Bo Tsang, assistant curator, Chinese Pictorial Arts. "Many of the ukiyo-e paintings from The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, donated by Dr. William Sturgis Bigelow, have rarely been displayed or loaned to other museums."

The early period of the art spanned 100 years, from the appearance in the 1670s of Hishikawa Moronobu—the first artist to be described as a ukiyo-e artist—to the introduction of full-colour printing in 1765. That year was the start of a period when the ukiyo-e genre flowered. While a wide variety of prints were creat-

by previous artists. Kiyonaga's women convey a sense of naturalism with their tall, elongated proportions. Utamaro's are imbued with a deep sensuality, bordering on the erotic.

The Utagawa School founded by Utagawa Toyoharu (1735–1814) established another distinctive style of representing the female form, emphasizing spatial relationships. The influence of the school expanded with the popularity of the expressive paintings of Kabuki actors by Toyoharu's disciple, Utagawa Toyokuni (who took his master's surname as a sign of respect).

## FROM THE CURATOR'S PERSPECTIVE

**More than a dozen** of the paintings in *Drama and Desire* present classical subjects from Japanese and Chinese legends through parody. Well-known historical or religious personalities are satirized by showing them in the guise of contemporary figures of a different gender, social status, or even culture.

*Parody of the Three Vinegar Tasters* is an excellent example. The artist, Chōbunsai Eishi, depicts three women standing around a large jar of liquid. Their costumes and hairstyles reveal their identities as an Edo courtesan (left), the celebrated Chinese Tang dynasty royal consort Yang-guifei (centre), and distinguished Heian poetess Ono no Komachi. A verse inscribed at the top of the painting reads:

"When they try a nip/the connoisseurs can tell you/whether it's

Right: *Parody of The Three Vinegar Tasters* is by Chōbunsai Eishi and inscribed by Ōta Nanpo. About 1821.

sweet or sour./Both in China and Japan/the Three Sages know."

In China, the three sages are three Song-dynasty friends—Su Shi, Huang Tingjian, and the Chan master Foyin, who according to legend met one day to enjoy some sweet peach wine. Unfortunately, the prized wine had turned into vinegar and each puckered his lips upon tasting it. But the sages may also be interpreted as Confucius, Laozi, and Shakyamuni, founders respectively of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. They are sometimes shown together to convey a hope that one day the three creeds may be united.

—Ka Bo Tsang



MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, BOSTON, WILLIAM STURGIS BIGELOW COLLECTION

ed, primarily for the commoners of Edo, paintings became even more refined, elegant—and expensive—especially the showy pieces commissioned by wealthy patrons.

The paintings and prints of beautiful women created by Torii Kiyonaga (1752–1815) and Kitagawa Utamaro (1753–1806) represent the pinnacle of ukiyo-e. Rivals early in their careers, both artists articulated an adult version of the feminine form rather than the more childlike figures rendered

But it was Katsushika Hokusai—with a career spanning more than 70 years—who became the giant of ukiyo-e. Celebrated for his landscape prints, he also produced numerous incomparable images of other subjects. He also decorated everyday articles, such as textiles, lanterns, banners, and festival floats.

For audiences today, ukiyo-e pictures provide a glimpse into another age and the spontaneous and vibrant young culture that then flourished in the urban centres of Edo, Osaka, and Kyoto.

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This exhibition was made possible by Fidelity Investments through the Fidelity Foundation

# GLASS WORLDS: PAPERWEIGHTS FROM THE ROM'S COLLECTION

APRIL 28 - NOVEMBER 25, 2007

**Though they were** the least valued objects made by glasshouses in the 19th century, glass paperweights held an allure for such famed collectors as Empress Eugénie of France, King Farouk of Egypt, and French writer Colette. Now visitors can see what captured these famous imaginations in the exhibition *Glass Worlds*, an intricately beautiful display of more than 250 fine 19th- and 20th-century glass paperweights.

"Throughout the 19th century, paperweights were not considered as artistically important as they are today," says Brian Musselwhite, curator of the ROM exhibit. "But the technology and patterns created beautifully complex *objets d'art*."

Collected for the ROM by Alice B. Hall and J. A. Howson Brocklebank,

the ROM's paperweights represent glassmakers from around the world. They reveal the complexities of the art and detail its technologies, some of which were founded in ancient times. Some of the globes contain tiny animals, reptiles, and insects.

A history section features glass from the ancient Islamic world, small bowls made in ancient Rome, and 20th-century examples such as the Italian handkerchief vase of 1949. Works by contemporary Canadian artisans—John Gooderham, Toan Klein, and Alexander Kapran, as well as Virginia Wilson Toccalino and Tony Toccalino—are also featured in the show.

*The Brocklebank Fund allows the Museum to add significant paperweights to its collection on a regular basis and sponsors the annual Brocklebank Paperweight Lecture.*

## BEYOND THE EXHIBITION

### Catalogue

An illustrated exhibition catalogue written by the exhibition's curator, Brian Musselwhite, will be available in the ROM Museum Store for \$14.99 plus tax.



## CONTINUING EXHIBITIONS

### Ancient Peru Unearthed: Golden Treasures of a Lost Civilization

■ Spectacular gold objects are the highlight of this blockbuster exhibition—ceremonial regalia, headdresses, jewellery, and ornaments. The exclusive North American tour of this show will help viewers understand the Sicán, the little-known civilization that produced these splendid and technologically advanced works.

Third-Floor Centre Block • Until 6 August 2007 • Presented by: HSBC Bank

### Heaven or Hell: Images of Chinese Buddhist and Daoist Deities and Immortals

■ This exhibit features more than 20 Chinese religious paintings and prints from the 10th through the 20th century, many of which have never before been on view. Several works depict Buddhist and Daoist concepts of heaven or hell as well as deities and divine figures.

Herman Herzog Levy Gallery, Main Floor • Until May 2007 • Exhibit

Sponsor: Manulife Financial

### Decorative Arts in the Art Deco Style from the Collection of Bernard and Sylvia Ostry

■ Noted Canadian collectors Sylvia Ostry and the late Bernard Ostry generously donated a significant collection of Art Deco furniture, lamps, and sculptures to the ROM. The collection, dating mainly from 1920s and 1930s France, contains rare and exemplary Art Deco works.

Samuel European Galleries,  
Third Floor • Indefinite run

For details, go to the ROM's Web site at [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca)

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Museum subway stop



The ROM is an agency of the Government of Ontario

## ROM PALEONTOLOGIST DISCOVERS FOSSIL ANIMAL

**ROM paleontologist** Dr. Jean-Bernard Caron is changing the way we understand early life. His specialty: a set of bizarre fossil animals that were among the first to roam the planet's oceans 505 million years ago—millions of years before dinosaurs. The peculiar fossils—some of which had unusual numbers of eyes and odd body shapes—come from the famous Burgess Shale site in BC, a place well known for the excellent preservation of its fossils. "The ROM's Burgess Shale collection—the world's largest and most comprehensive—is a goldmine of specimens new to science," says Caron.

Last year he published a ground-breaking article identifying the world's oldest soft-bodied mollusc. Now, he's made a new discovery: with Dr. Simon Conway Morris from the University of Cambridge, England, he has identified a previously unknown fossil animal called *Orthrozanclus reburrus*. The tiny slug-like creature likely grazed on seafloor bacterial mats. The authors believe its impressive spines—a form of body armour—evolved to protect the animal against predators. Look for this fossil animal in the galleries in 2008.

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BRIAN BOYLE R.L.



## AUDIO TOURS AVAILABLE

The Director's Choice Audio Tour, a guided tour of the Museum's permanent collections, is now available year round in English or French for a cost to Members of \$4 (\$5 for non-Members). Narrated by the CBC's Andy Barrie, the tour tells the stories that don't make it onto Museum labels, including highlights such as a historic painting by Paul Kane and a beautiful luohan figure through which the ROM came to know George Crofts, one of its most prodigious collectors of Chinese materials.

As an added bonus of purchasing the audio tour, a tour of any special exhibition, such as *Ancient Peru*, which is now on display, is also included. The mp3 devices with built-in speaker



BRIAN BOYLE R.L.

and headphones are available at the Admissions or Membership desks. For visitors with hearing loss, neck loops are available with T-coil compatible hearing aids.

## DISCOUNTED ADMISSION TO PIONEER VILLAGE

Black Creek Pioneer Village is offering all ROM Members an attractive Internet discount on admission. Beginning in May, ROM Members pay only \$10 adult, \$9 senior or student, and \$7 children—more than 20 percent off the regular price—when they purchase tickets online. Simply go to [www.blackcreek.ca](http://www.blackcreek.ca), click on the Corporate and Group Tickets button, and type the code ROM-07 into the window titled Group or Promotion Code. Select, purchase, and print your tickets to present when you visit Pioneer Village.

Tickets are valid most days from



May 1 to December 31, 2007, excluding a few special events. Closed December 25 and 26. For information, call Pioneer Village at 416.736.1733.

## AGO EXCHANGE DAY FOR ROM MEMBERS

On Saturday, July 21, 2007, from 10 am to 5:30 pm, ROM Members can enjoy free admission to the Art Gallery of Ontario.

**Location:** 317 Dundas Street West, Toronto

**Procedures:** Simply present your ROM

Membership card at the AGO Membership Desk. Guest privileges are excluded for this event.

### Exhibitions and gallery highlights:

- Medieval and Renaissance Treasures

from the Victoria and Albert Museum

- Indian Contemporary Art: Hungry God
- Chuck Close – A Couple of Ways of Doing Something
- Bernini in Focus



- Treasures of the Tsimshian from the Dundas Collection

For further information, call the AGO at 416.979.6648 or visit their Web site at [www.ago.net](http://www.ago.net).

## ANCIENT PERU TAKES ROM TOWARD ACCESSIBILITY

The ROM has made an important foray into accessibility with its latest exhibition, *Ancient Peru Unearthed: Golden Treasures of a Lost Civilization*. As part of a commitment to making the Museum accessible to everyone, the design team and the curator of the ROM showing of *Ancient Peru* have been working in consultation with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB) to help give visitors with vision loss a more concrete understanding of the show. Together they have developed five pedestal-mounted, touchable displays each emblematic of one of the show's five sections. In mid-May, three-dimensional tactile models will be placed at the start of each section, including a model platform mound and a model of the Sicán Lord's mask, a potent symbol of the people's belief system.

"Producing the models is a good first step toward accessibility for the

Museum," says curator Justin Jennings. "Normally what we display are artifacts that can't be touched because of preservation issues. Consulting with the CNIB has been critical in understanding what's important in making material understandable to those with vision loss—not just that it's 3D," he adds, "but that it's legible to different ways of sensing." The models will be produced in colour for those with partial vision, and labelled in English, French, and Braille. As well, pathways through the show are all wheelchair accessible and a four-page takeaway Spanish language guide is available.



"Making the exhibition more accessible isn't just a benefit to those with disabilities," notes Jennings. "In addition to being tools to assist those with vision loss, these models serve as teaching pieces for all visitors—adults and especially kids. Having the opportunity to touch items related to the ancient world opens a whole new way of experiencing the Museum."

## CURATOR'S CORNER

Lecture Series for Senior Members.  
Free for ROM Members 55+.

Wednesday, June 27, 2007

11 am to noon



### Coffins and Mummies: ROM Treasures

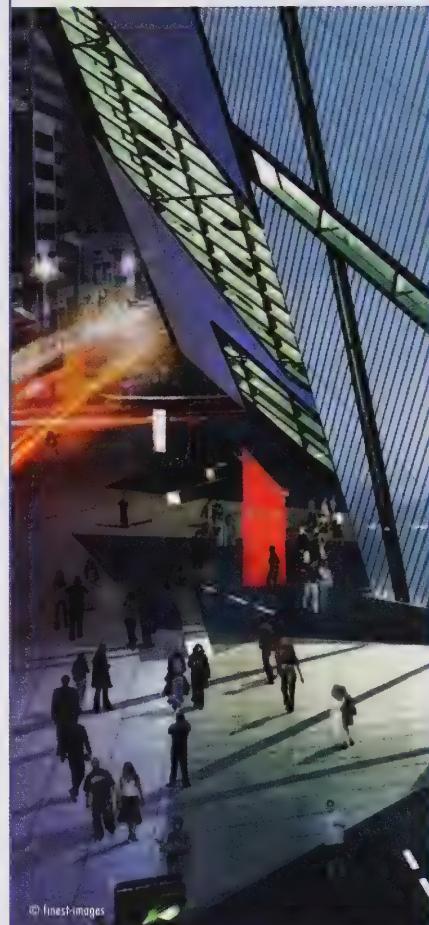
The ROM's collection of Egyptian coffins and mummies is the finest in Canada. This illustrated talk will discuss the origins of the collection, including recently uncovered information. See how coffins developed and how styles changed over time, discover what coffins tell us about the lives of their former owners, and learn about a ROM example not yet on display.

**Speaker:** Mark Trumpour, trustee of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities (SSEA) and ROM gallery interpreter

**Location:** Signy and Cléophée Eaton Theatre • Enter via Loblaws Entrance and register at the Membership Desk • Register online at [www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php](http://www.rom.on.ca/visit/index.php), e-mail [membership@rom.on.ca](mailto:membership@rom.on.ca), or call 416.586.5700.

*The series resumes in September. Check the ROM's Web calendar at [www.rom.on.ca/visit/calendar](http://www.rom.on.ca/visit/calendar) for future details and additional programming.*

# Entertain



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Coming this fall ...

Photo: George Anderson



## Calling Mr. Bell The Art of Biography

Charlotte Gray describes the challenges and surprises she encountered as she researched and wrote her most recent biography, *Reluctant Genius: The Passionate Life and Inventive Mind of Alexander Graham Bell*. She will talk about the inventor's eccentric brilliance and the crucial role that his deaf wife, Mabel, played in his life.



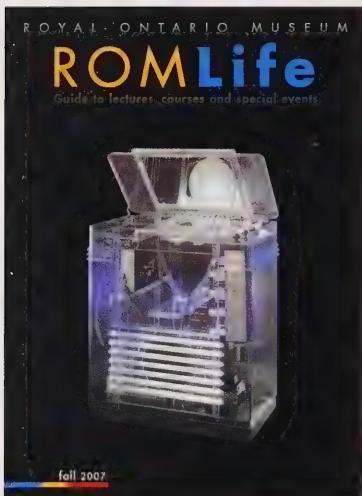
Photo © ROM 2007

## William Morris World's First Celebrity Designer

Long before Martha Stewart, in the grime of Victorian Britain, William Morris revolutionized interior decoration and textile patterns. He developed a certain signature look considered avant-garde in the 1860s, yet still vibrant in the 1960s. Learn about the ROM's Morris collection and discover how this unconventional Bohemian developed a brand imprint that lasted for more than a century.

## Sketching In the New Galleries

Want to expand your ability to record visual experiences in your own hand? Be among the first to draw the new displays of the ROM's artifacts. Explore fundamental freehand sketching techniques in a diversity of media, including pencil, ink, conté, and coloured pencil.



**Registration begins August 15.**  
See the full fall line-up of lectures and courses at [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca), or call 416.586.5871 for your free copy of the ROMLife programs guide.

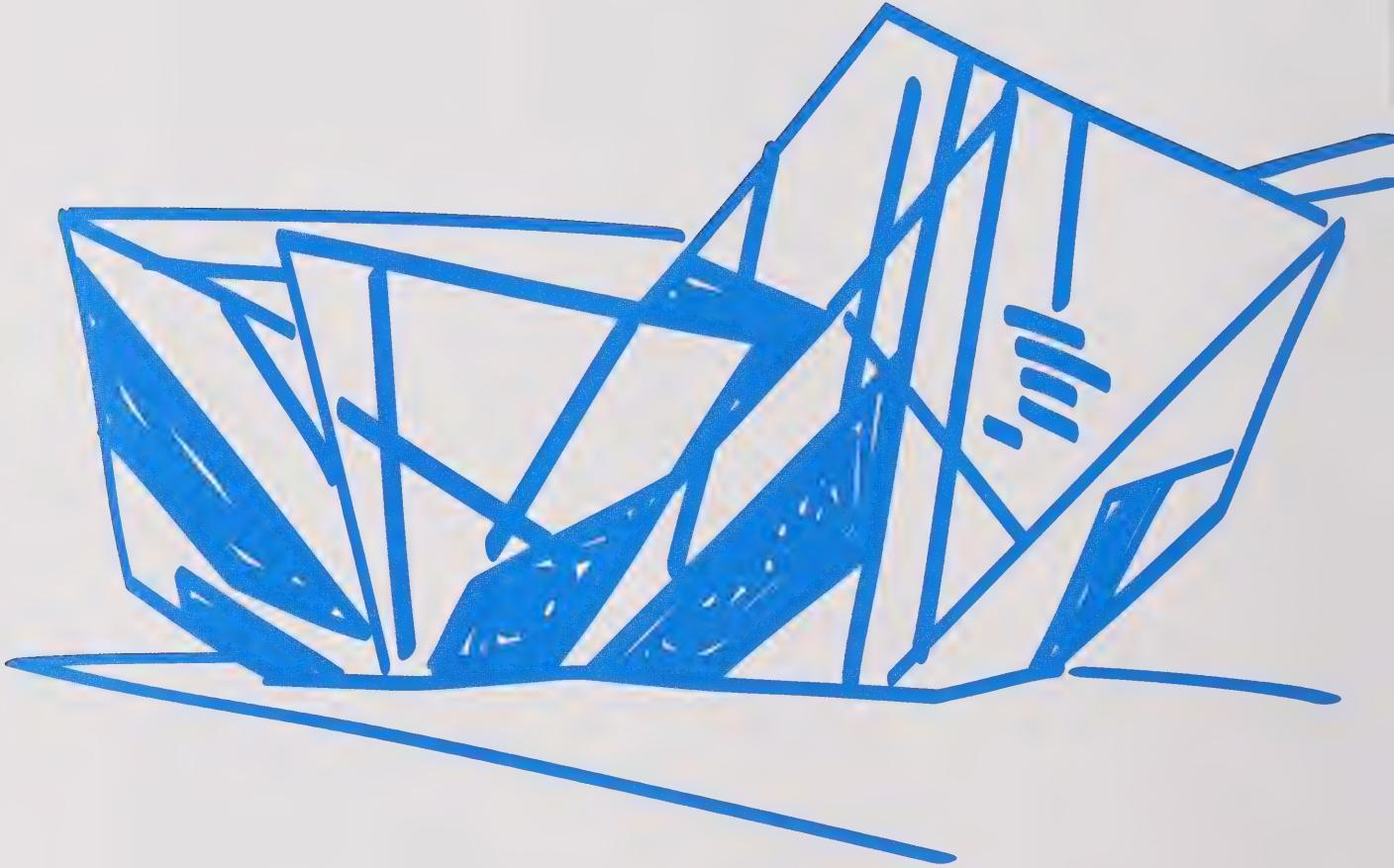
# The best investment strategies are crystal clear.

Congratulations to the Royal Ontario Museum on the opening of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. From a firm that also believes in building for the future.

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# Welcome home.



BMO Financial Group proudly sponsors  
*Hiroshi Sugimoto: History of History*, inaugural exhibition  
in the Institute for Contemporary Culture's new gallery.

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## CORRECTION NOTE

In the last issue of *ROM Members' News*, the photograph shown at left was incorrectly identified as a Peruvian forehead ornament depicting a vampire bat. Indeed, the image is a gold Peruvian ornament—but it

is the Sicán Lord's mask. The vampire-bat forehead ornament is a separate piece that can be used with the mask. In the photo at right the entire mask ensemble is shown complete with vampire-bat forehead ornament above the main mask.

## The Subway Stops Outside Our Door

The Museum subway station on the St George line is named for us because it stops just steps away from the ROM. If you are travelling from the east or west on the Bloor line, the ROM is close to both the St. George and Bay stops.

ROM Reproductions

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Head of Aphrodite, from a Greek marble circa 200 BCE

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# Celebrating history, Building the future



Sentry Select would like to congratulate the Royal Ontario Museum on its new Michael Lee-Chin Crystal – a contemporary, architectural marvel that will enhance the ROM experience.

Sentry Select 

## Building partnerships™

Sentry Select Capital Corp. is a Canadian wealth management company who manages approximately \$8 billion in gross assets. The company offers a diverse range of investment products including closed-end trusts, mutual funds, principal-protected notes and flow-through limited partnerships, covering a variety of domestic and global mandates. To find out how Sentry Select investments can complement your portfolio, contact your financial advisor or visit [www.sentryselect.com](http://www.sentryselect.com).



BRIAN BOYLE/ROM

## Chef Ted Corrado Takes the Helm at C5

**Newly hired** as chef de cuisine for the ROM's C5 Restaurant Lounge, Ted Corrado is thinking globally and cooking locally. Inspired by the city's cultural diversity, the self-confessed Toronto boy will be taking an international perspective in his cooking. "The Museum is a microcosm for Toronto," says Corrado, "which as a culinary city has lots of places from which to draw inspiration."

But in those multicultural-inspired dishes he plans to use local produce—in the process creating a contemporary and distinctly Metro cuisine. Corrado has put together some sample menus, but he is holding off on designing his opening menu in order to get the most seasonal goods available. "I don't cook according to what's in my head," says the young chef, one of a generation of youthful cooks taking Toronto by storm, "but according to what I see around me." Corrado goes to the Food Terminal himself to gather the freshest ingredients. And he and his staff make everything in-house—from breads, to pastas, to pastries.

His five-star menus can be paired with wines from a great selection of regional offerings. And Corrado is toying with the idea of "tasting menus"—

set menus selected by the chef.

A life-long foodie, Corrado decided to make a profession of his passion after visiting Europe and seeing the deep appreciation there for food. He honed his skills while opening Luce for the Rubino Brothers, and has worked at ZooM, Rain, and most recently at George, where he helped put the dining-room of the women's club on the map as a destination in its own right. He hopes to do the same at the ROM.

The spare elegance of the C5 dining-room, designed by award-winning firm II by IV, with its breathtaking views of the city, will play its own part in drawing diners. A sophisticated separate lounge seems poised to become the hip place for after-work drinks or as a late-night stop-off. Corrado will serve up hot, cold, and crispy fare in the space, which features soft leather seating and original glass art.

So where does Corrado like to eat? He likes to keep it simple and authentic—pizza at Terroni's, tacos at el Asador on Clinton, dim sum at Kim Garden.

In late June, C5 will open for lunch on weekdays, dinner Thursday to Saturday, and Sunday for brunch.

# Savour

# c5

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restaurant // lounge

Toronto's newest fine dining destination located at the pinnacle of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

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# EXPLORAT

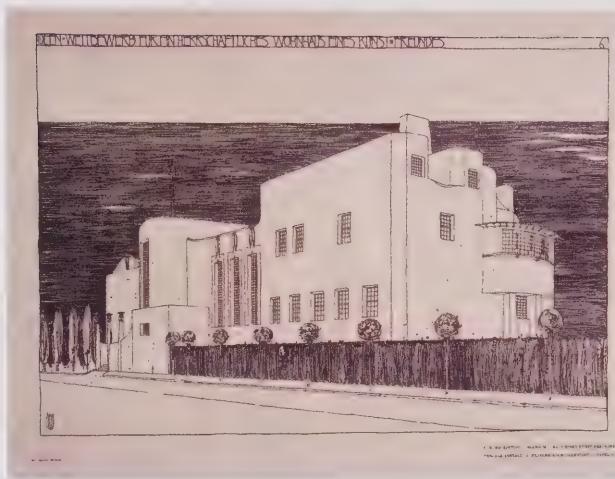
## Divine Design

Ancient Greece helped Fortuny create the look

**The Delphos dress**, the epitome of simple elegance, was designed in 1907 by artist and designer Mariano Fortuny, who drew his inspiration from the tunics of ancient Greece. Made individually by hand, the magnificent Fortuny gowns were of fine permanently pleated silk in a variety of rich colours. The tiny glass beads, manufactured in Murano, serve a functional as well as decorative purpose: they weigh down the light silk and hold it in place. Well aware of the commercial value of his designs, Fortuny kept his pleating technique a carefully guarded secret during his lifetime. Numerous avant-garde women, including theatre legends Isadora Duncan and Sarah Bernhardt, owned his Delphos dresses. The ROM's example originally belonged to international socialite Rita Halle Kleeman, who loved it so much she wore it into her 80s.

# ONS

## Getting our duckbills in a row



## Building a Dream

### Charles Rennie Mackintosh's House for an Art Lover

**A trip to** Glasgow would not be complete without visits to the icons of Mackintosh architecture—Hill House, the Glasgow School of Art, and Miss Cranston's Willow Tea Room. But the pièce de résistance is the House for an Art Lover, completed in 1996, more than 80 years after Mackintosh submitted the designs for an architectural competition under the pseudonym “Der Vogel.” Though Mackintosh’s entry was disqualified—possibly for missing the deadline—German publisher Alexander Koch published three of the entries, including Mackintosh’s, as separate portfolios in 1902. Almost 90 years later, the Fraser Press of Glasgow published a limited second edition of this exceedingly rare and valuable publication with an introduction by Mackintosh scholar Roger Billcliffe. The ROM has recently acquired the edition for its Rare Book Collections.

Building the house from Mackintosh’s plan was an idea that came to Glasgow civil engineer Graham Roxburgh while he was trapped in a blizzard in the Scottish Highlands with his stepdaughter Melanie Lang in the late 1980s. They began construction on the house soon afterwards, but before long recession brought them to a halt. Fortunately, Dougal Cameron, director of the Glasgow School of Art, toured the unfinished project with Roxburgh, and envisioned it as a new home for graduate art studies. With his help, and with support from Glasgow City Council, Mackintosh’s dream home was at last completed.

— Arthur Smith

**A highlight** of the ROM’s collection of prehistoric life is a series of duckbilled dinosaurs from Alberta, 65 to 75 million years old—one of which is on display on the Museum’s main floor. The collection just got a little better with the recent purchase of a complete and relatively uncrushed skull of *Edmontosaurus annectens* from South Dakota, a species that would have lived alongside *Tyrannosaurus* and *Ceratops*.

We know that the flat-headed *Edmontosaurus* lived in Canada and the US during the last 7 million years of the Age of Dinosaurs. But there is considerable confusion—and disagreement among researchers—over how many species within the genus once existed and what their geographic distribution was.

The new skull can help re-



searchers determine the significance of this variation by comparing it with other specimens. This work is part of a larger project evaluating the evolution and extinction of dinosaurs in the Late Cretaceous of North America.

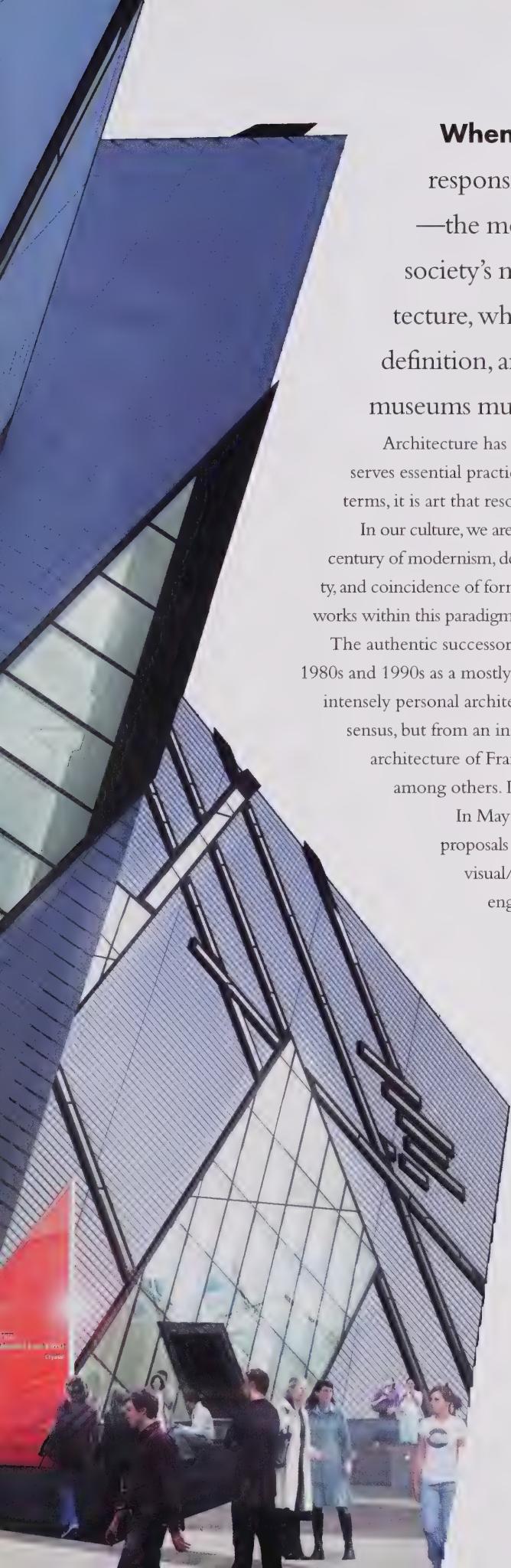
— Kevin Seymour and David Evans

# A CLEAR CASE FOR CRYSTAL

BY WILLIAM THORSELL

You may think you've heard the last word on the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, but these dazzling thinkers offer provocative must-reads on a building that is changing the face of Toronto





**When they build,** cultural institutions have a responsibility to serve as patrons of great architecture—the most public of the arts. They should be among society's most creative and contemporary agents of architecture, whatever their mission in preserving the past. By definition, art moves boundaries. As patrons of architecture, museums must seek to create as well as to collect art.

Architecture has many other dimensions, of course. It exists in a particular context and serves essential practical purposes. While truly great architecture stands as art on its own terms, it is art that resolves, works, and endures. It is a demanding assignment.

In our culture, we are at a transformative period in architecture. We have emerged from almost a century of modernism, defined by the Bauhaus with its ideology of efficiency, simplicity, practicality, and coincidence of form and function. The International Style in architecture created brilliant works within this paradigm, but like most paradigms in a culture, it has run its course.

The authentic successor to this period is not “post-modernism,” which appeared briefly in the 1980s and 1990s as a mostly ironic throwback to earlier ages—“pre-modernism” in effect. It is the intensely personal architecture of artists—works not derived from an ideology or social consensus, but from an inspiration, a vision, a psychology—that now takes the fore. This is the architecture of Frank Gehry, Santiago Calatrava, Zaha Hadid, and Daniel Libeskind, among others. It is not taught; it is found.

In May 2001, the ROM published its “Vision for Architecture” as a guide for proposals to create a new building on Bloor Street. It called for a “powerful visual/emotional/psychological” presence that would see “integration and engagement with the urban fabric.”

This reaching language expressed our desire to create a dynamic connection to the city. At the same time, we sought to revive our heritage buildings, resolve internal space and use issues, and provide new facilities for galleries and public amenities.

Daniel Libeskind has done all this and more through the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. He has pulled the curtain back on a new face of beauty, as only an artist can. He has created a powerful new urban presence and public space in the heart of Canada’s largest city. And he has created a unique and moving dialogue between the older buildings and the new, enlightening both in the process.

At the same time, the new ROM emerges in the context of fine neighbouring developments down the street in a new cultural precinct—Toronto’s Museum Arts District.

We thank the contributors who bring their perceptions and responses to this work in this first issue of our revitalized *ROM Magazine*. We celebrate the debate that arises in response to the Lee-Chin Crystal. And we invite you to encounter it for yourselves.

William Thorsell is director and CEO of the Royal Ontario Museum.

# THE COMPANY GRANDEUR KEEPERS

BY LARRY WAYNE RICHARDS

Reflections on Daniel Libeskind's ROM

**An architect must think and feel** as a poet, combine and embellish as a painter, and execute as a sculptor. So said Sir John Soane, one of England's greatest architects. For him, these abilities allowed the architect to infuse a building with character and activate sensation in the spectator. Soane, who lived from 1753 to 1837, practiced what he preached, designing and constructing numerous public projects. He also created his own astonishing house-museum in London, England, which is artfully packed with treasures from antiquity.

A recent visit to Soane's remarkable museum caused me to reflect on Daniel Libeskind's overlay on the Royal Ontario Museum. Like Soane some 200 years earlier, Libeskind behaves as poet, painter, and sculptor in one. With the ROM, Libeskind has generated a powerful work of architecture for Toronto that exudes character and triggers the body's senses, literally halting passersby on Queen's Park and Bloor Street in their tracks. To more fully understand Libeskind's prismatic ROM, it is necessary to go beyond John Soane and into the modern era—to the 20th and early 21st centuries. What other character-rich and aggressively sensory works of architecture might we examine, which in various ways parallel the work of Libeskind? Five that I have personally visited come to mind: Casa Mila in Barcelona; the National



and University Library, Ljubljana; New York's Guggenheim Museum; the Museum of Art in Sao Paulo; and the Swiss Re Tower in London. These five buildings and Libeskind's ROM addition have several basic things in common. All were constructed in dense, urban environments; each is imaginatively conceived spatially; and all have an aura of grandeur. (In terms of grandeur, I agree with what contemporary architect Rem Koolhaas once said: "Without grandeur, of course, there is no mythology, unless it's the mythology of being normal.")

So allow me to briefly "tour" these five exceptional works of architecture and to draw parallels with the ROM's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

### CASA MILA 1906-1910 • BARCELONA, SPAIN

**Architect: Antoni Gaudi**

Irregularly shaped and evocative of geological formations, the stone facades of Gaudi's Casa Mila apartments in Barcelona conceal a hefty steel skeleton much in the way Libeskind's massive steel structure for the Lee-Chin Crystal is hidden by an elaborate aluminum skin. Casa Mila anticipated the wave of Expressionism that erupted in Europe over the next few decades and its weirdly shaped windows and organic iron balconies are akin to the painterly slashes of window that activate the surfaces of Libeskind's forms. Perhaps most important in this comparison is the fact that both Casa Mila and the Lee-Chin Crystal have no rectilinear interior spaces. Both present complex plan configurations and dramatic sequences of interior vertical space. And both Gaudi and Libeskind create an architecture that is deeply visceral, that is about and manipulative of our emotions.

### NATIONAL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, LJUBLJANA

1936-1941 • LJUBLJANA, SLOVENIA

**Architect: Josef Plecnik**

Designed by one of the 20th century's most under-rated architects, Josef (Joze) Plecnik, this library in the heart of Slovenia's capital is a place of great spiritual energy. Similar in feel to Libeskind's ROM addition, this building is imbued with a sense of historical consciousness and continuity achieved through sequences of magnificent interior spaces bathed in natural light and the sophisticated layering of old and new. Plecnik's library incorporated fragments of older buildings that had been on the site.

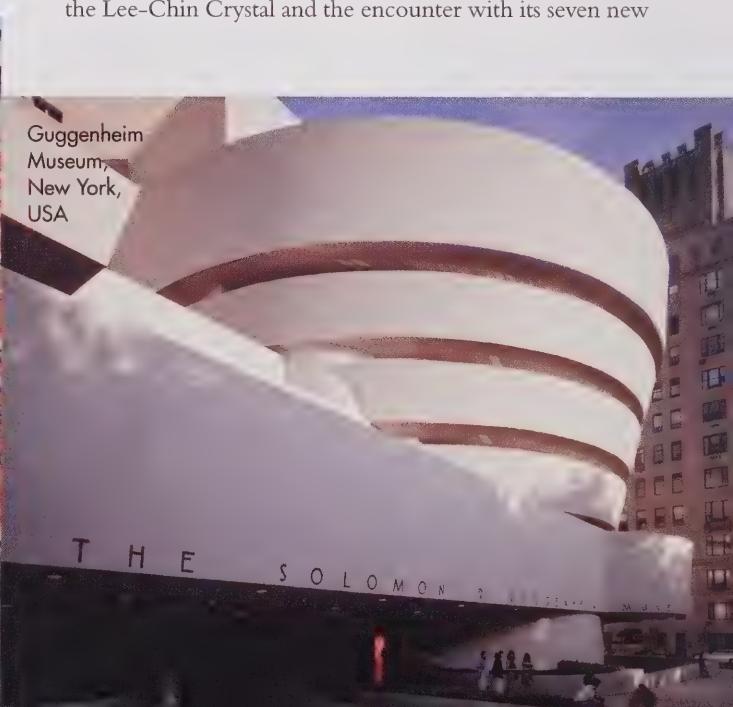
Its exterior is rendered in rough stone and brick with "folded" windows every bit as eccentric as those of Libeskind. Plecnik imagined the library as a solemn temple of learning, and his architecture draws visitors, ritually, up a dark stair towards the splendour of the high-ceilinged reading room. At the ROM, when I climbed Libeskind's spiralling, black stone-paved Stair of Wonders and then became enveloped in the intimacy and quiet of his Spirit House, I recalled the dignity and wonder of Plecnik's "mannerist-modern" Ljubljana Library.

### GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM 1956-1959 • NEW YORK, USA

**Architect: Frank Lloyd Wright**

An extended spatial helix, the spiralling Guggenheim is one of New York's most iconic buildings. Although its sloping floors and curving walls place considerable demands on curators and exhibition designers, it is fair to say that the Guggenheim is a memorable place loved by the public.

Active, abstract, confrontational, dynamic, organic—these words that apply to the Guggenheim can also be applied to the Lee-Chin Crystal and the encounter with its seven new



galleries. These are not passive environments. They are accelerating spaces that engage participants. Frank Lloyd Wright despised what he called “museum factotums”—deadly, humdrum cultural factories. Daniel Libeskind thinks along the same lines, expecting that his ROM renovations and addition will generate real intellectual and sensory stimulation, and allow the Museum to become a vital place where visitors will think of their role in culture and history, even, hopefully, becoming more engaged citizens.

### **MUSEUM OF ART, SAO PAULO 1957-1968 • SAO PAULO, BRAZIL**

#### **Architect: Lina Bo Bardi**

Like Plecnik, Lina Bo Bardi has not been given the attention that she deserves as one of the 20th century's most accomplished architects. Bardi's 1968 Museum of Art in Sao Paulo, a hovering *tour-de-force* on Avenida Paulista, captures the urban space around it. Muscular and tough, it has an architectural image that competes successfully with the dense chaos of Sao Paulo. Major urban museums need to stand out and rise above the everyday fabric of the metropolis. Bardi's vision accomplished this in Sao Paulo, as will Libeskind's in Toronto. As our city grows—the population of the GTA is projected to be about 8 million in 25 years—most buildings will, as in Sao Paulo, quickly dissolve into a kind of undistinguished “urban soup.” The generous scale and prismatic shape, along with the light-enhancing aluminum skin, give the ROM's Lee-Chin Crystal a distinguished character. It will surely survive through the century as a valued, iconic work of architecture, much as the powerful Museum of Art has in the vast cityscape of Sao Paulo.

### **SWISS RE TOWER 2000-2004 • LONDON, ENGLAND**

#### **Architect: Norman Foster**

When last in London, I was captivated by the Gherkin, as this pickle-shaped structure is affectionately known. Presenting itself among the domes, spires, and chimneys of London, the Swiss Re building by Lord Norman Foster certainly stands out; but it also seems to belong, and in this sense is

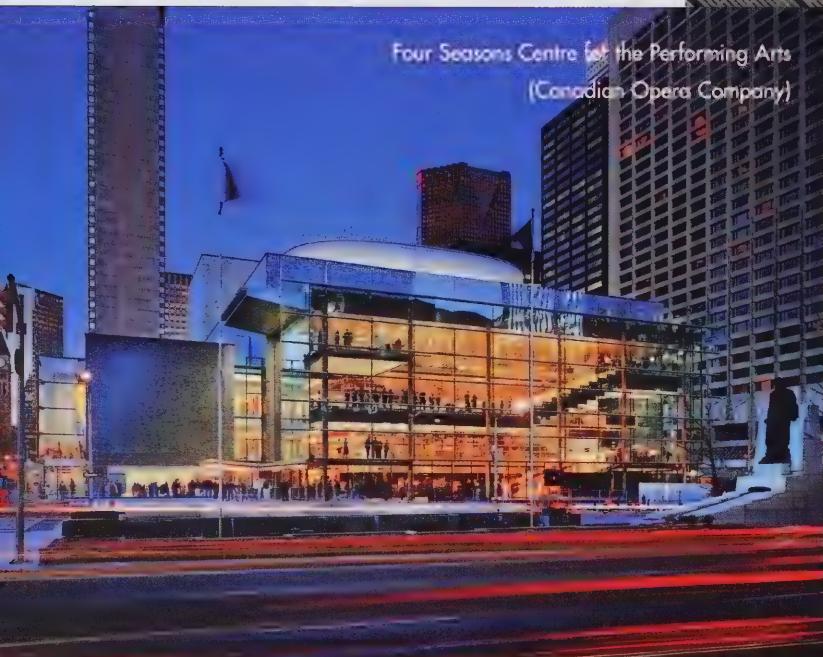
quite contextual. Both the exterior and the interior employ a restrained, sophisticated palette of materials and colours. The building has a monumental quality while, at the same time, it is humanly scaled. Although not a tower and sculpturally quite different, the ROM's addition shares this sense of belonging. The public plaza enfolds the space of Bloor Street into the building, making an inviting gathering place. And the quick glimpses of the Libeskind “shards” peeking out over Philosophers' Walk and towards the Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art seem more at home every day. As the Gherkin has in London, our angular, shimmering Lee-Chin Crystal, while simultaneously standing out and fitting in, will become a cherished piece of Toronto.

**If Sir John Soane** could walk along Bloor Street and encounter Libeskind's superimposition on the Royal Ontario Museum, I wonder what he would make of it. A silly notion perhaps; but I cannot help but think that the enormously imaginative, daring Soane would approve. ROM



Museum of Art, Sao Paulo, Brazil

BY JOE BERRIDGE



DIAMOND AND SCHmitt ARCHITECTS INC. STEVEN EVANS PHOTOGRAPHY

CRYSTAL



## What the city's new architecture says about us

In a city made nervous by big moves, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal was a huge gamble. The chaotic pile of steel on Bloor Street that hung around far too long, the endless uncertainty as to whether what we were seeing was in fact the building's final exterior cladding, the collateral chatter of rumour and gossip—all are now resolved. After an interminable reverse striptease, that over-boned skeleton is finally dressed. The Lee-Chin Crystal has arrived, glinting its angular presence along Bloor Street. Its exterior is remarkable. The interior is spectacular, unlike anything else in the world.



New National Ballet School buildings from left to right: Margaret McCain Academic Building, Celia Franca Centre (including Northfield House), and The R.A. Laidlaw Centre (Betty Oliphant Theatre & Ivey House)

TOM ARBAN : GOLDSMITH BORGAL & COMPANY LTD. ARCHITECTS

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The ROM's dramatic makeover is just one of several architectural high-wire acts that Toronto has been watching open-mouthed in the past few years as each of its major cultural institutions reinvents itself. Their combined architectural impact represents one of the strongest statements of cultural confidence to be found in any contemporary city. But what many of its citizens, myself included, are trying to figure out is what exactly is being said.

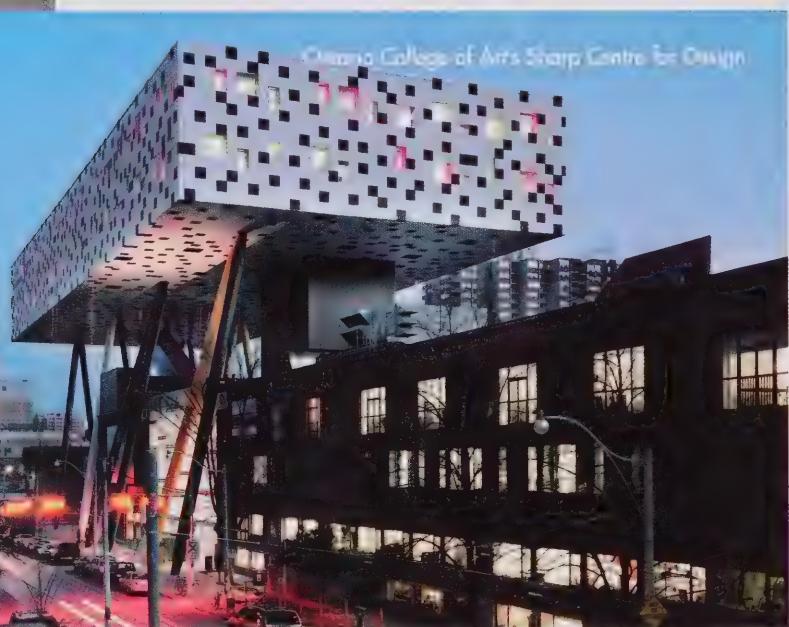
The designs for the National Ballet School and the Royal Conservatory of Music by Kuwabara Payne McKenna Blumberg Architects and the Canadian Opera Company's new building by Diamond and Schmitt Architects, both locally based firms, are in their separate ways perfectly formed examples of the restrained modernism that is becoming the house style for the city. The overall effect is akin to seeing one's grown-up son in a perfectly tailored suit

the first time, wondering quite where this child has come from, delighting in his arrival.

The architects from away, however, are telling us something completely different. First to arrive was the Sharp Centre for Design. This delightfully ridiculous table-top expansion of the Ontario College of Art and Design by UK architect Will Alsop flies with an insouciant lightness of being over the college's utterly ordinary McCaul Street main building. No one had shown such lack of architectural restraint in the city since Sir Henry Pellat's absurd pile, Casa Loma. Just down the street is Frank Gehry's makeover of the Art Gallery of Ontario, with its swoosh of metal and glass fronting Dundas and the new monolith rising on the park now provoking a nervousness analogous to that of the first sightings of the Lee-Chin Crystal.

Why did Will Alsop's building, which makes people

smile and laugh, strike so positive a chord in the city? Why have Libeskind's—and soon I'm sure Gehry's—finished schemes put to rest our initial anxiety? Is this the careful, cautious Toronto we know? The Toronto so astute-



RICHARD JOHNSON, INTERIORIMAGES.CA

ly captured in Margaret Atwood's late '80s novel *Cat's Eye*?

*Underneath the flourish and ostentation is the old city, street after street of thick red brick houses, with their front porch pillars like the off-white stems of toadstools and their watchful, calculating windows. Malicious, grudging, vindictive, implacable.*

Nice place, that city! But the enthusiastic reaction both to the elegant modernism of our hometown architects and to the more radical interventions of the outsiders could well be heralding the profound, almost existential, transformation that has been taking place in Toronto over the past decade, a collective emergence from the worrisome odour of decline so pervasive in the '90s.

Toronto's sense of itself as the city that works, as the city of neighbourhoods, as the peaceable civic kingdom had become increasingly at odds not just with the competitive reality of other surging cities but with the obvious decay of our infrastructure, public realm, and social cohesion. Our city, gleefully abandoned by its country and province and increasingly irrelevant in the wider world, was sinking. Collectively, these buildings now tell a very different story.

How does a city turn itself around to take the bold initiatives necessary to gain and maintain status as a significant global centre? A question particularly poignant for a place with so strong a domestic strain in its municipal makeup, so cautious of any actions beyond the comfortable confines of the local, the com-

munity, and the street, a city whose patron saint is that advocate of all things local, Jane Jacobs. When Frank Gehry was retained by the Art Gallery of Ontario, he was subjected to a painstaking "community" review. Perhaps the greatest architect of our time was subjected to vocal locals' critiques of his building's height, massing, traffic impact, and streetscape. Not for Toronto the artistic freedom of other cities. At a recent conference in Lyon, the representatives of Bilbao recounted how vigorously local residents had objected to Gehry's masterpiece, the new Guggenheim, and how quite properly they had been ignored. "Urban regeneration is an affair of state on which local residents can thus have no bearing," opined one of their cultural grandees. What absurd arrogance! But look who were creating the glorious modern cities. At home, the object of Jacobs's affection had strangely regressed into Atwood's city.

Surprisingly, the impetus for our urban cultural renaissance came from the Conservative government of Mike Harris, a man not immediately thought of as a friend of our city, but someone who recognized that a new urban spirit

could best be represented by new buildings. So credit has to be given for Ontario's dogged persistence in striking a funding agreement with the federal government that would allow five major cultural institutions to undertake major expansions and a sixth, the Canadian Opera Company, to create a brand new opera house.

That agreement secured contributions from the two senior governments of approximately a quarter billion dollars; and for providing such essential funding they deserve great credit. What is less well appreciated—and this is the real story of the remaking of our city—is that three times that amount was collectively fundraised for the six building projects in a relatively short and overlapping time period. Anyone who thought in the early '90s that donations of such an order of magnitude were achievable would have been assured such things were not possible in Toronto. But we did it, and at a level of contribution probably proportionately greater than any other city. The citizens, led it has to be said by the city's elite, deserve to take the biggest

The Art Gallery of Ontario's new Frank Gehry-designed addition



bow. As do the set of extraordinary cultural entrepreneurs, notably Richard Bradshaw at the COC, Matthew Teitelbaum at the AGO, and William Thorsell at the ROM, all stalwart captains of perilous building enterprises, who nevertheless got them built and paid for. Great cities are made by great people; what is remarkable is the way those people seem spontaneously to arise.

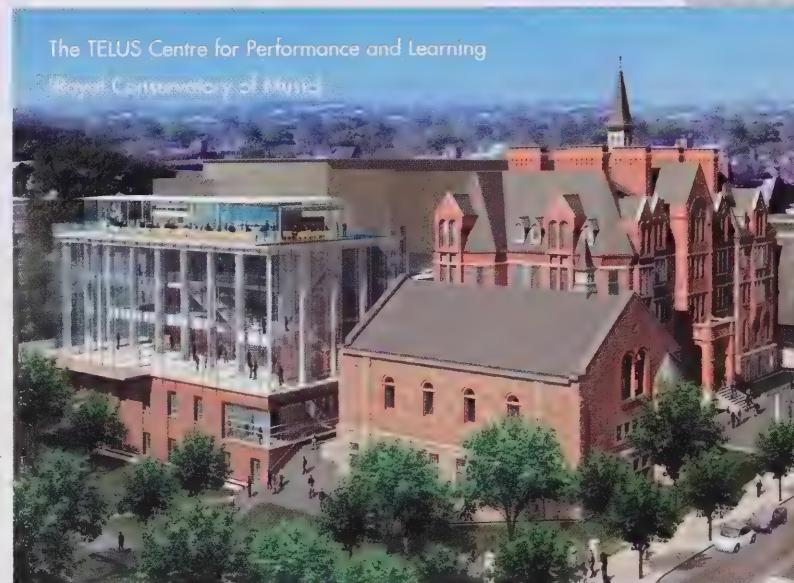
We are fortunate that the people of Toronto have been so generous. University Avenue, the boulevard that links all but one of our cultural renaissance buildings, features broken sidewalks, desiccated trees, and neglected street furniture—testimony to the unsettling absence of leadership at the level of government nominally responsible for our urban future, the City of Toronto. The city contributed nothing to the funding of the cultural buildings and indeed, despite having received over half a million dollars in building permit fees from the ROM alone, had the temerity initially to demand a \$2,400 annual levy on the tip of Libeskind's crystal that leans into Bloor Street. Atwood's city endures on the floor of city council.

But behind the ROM, in the quiet of the tree-lined Philosophers' Walk, a different classic city voice can be heard: that of Robertson Davies, the novelist of this part of town. "Flat-footed, hard-breathing, high-aspiring Toronto," is how Davies described us in *The Cunning Man*. Davies took a rambunctious delight in skewering the pretensions of a city that to him was irredeemably, endearingly provincial, a gawky urban adolescent not quite sure which fork to use. Have we in our unprecedented architectural ostentation avoided the perils of Atwood's grudging city only to be caught in Davies' trap of *nouveau-riche* self-aggrandizement?

Well, he, too, might have misjudged the force of the new. There have been times before when the city has shaken loose from its two stereotypes, when something greater than "flat-footed" has emerged from its "malicious, implacable" streets. In a glorious moment in the '60s and early '70s, New City Hall, the TD Centre, Ontario Place, and the Eaton Centre all announced the arrival of new possibilities for the place where we live. We are at a similar moment now. The six new buildings are sending two clear messages after all: first, that any great city will have its own distinctive

style of excellence, bred from its own internal gene pool; and second, that our city lives in a larger world, one that is by turns funny, lyrical, and frightening. The city now seems ready to hear both messages reflected in its buildings.

In the new ROM, while there is an intensely European sensibility at work, that wider world, the modern world, is clearly in evidence. Libeskind is best known as an architect who attempts in his buildings to reconcile the horrors of the modern world with life in the modern city; the Jewish Museum in Berlin, the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester, UK, and the tortured commission to remake the World Trade Center site in New York City—all are sculptural searches for such reconciliation. That does not make them easy buildings.



KPMB ARCHITECTS/Q STUDIO LTD.

Libeskind shares with Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas a mistrust of sentimentality, of the "niceness" that is always Toronto's temptation. Not for him the comforting curvilinearity of Frank Gehry's building. The past and the future, harsh and honest, have arrived in the new ROM.

But that is now our city. The modern world has crashed in, and more than half its citizens will soon be visible minorities, too many of them forced to leave cruel, angular circumstances elsewhere. Of all the renaissance buildings, Libeskind's dramatic, uncompromising remake of the ROM may be the most accurate statement of where our city is now headed, a bewildering, anxious, global megalopolis that neither Margaret Atwood nor Robertson Davies—let alone the rest of us—can fully comprehend. It is, however, telling us something that may be more true to our deepest cultural coding—that Toronto is never more itself than when it embraces the future. ROM

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# THE SHAPE OF AMBIGUITY

BY BRUCE KUWABARA

How oppositions energize the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal

**Back in March,** I was standing at the corner of Bloor Street and Avenue Road in front of the Church of the Redeemer.

Behind me, a ten-year-old boy yelled out to his father, "Hey Dad, look at that!" pointing to the ROM's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. "It's awesome!" His father said, "Let's go over and take a closer look."

A week later, I met with an editor of a European publishing house that produces books on architecture. Since her last visit to Toronto more than three years before, the cityscape had changed significantly. I asked her what she thought about Daniel Libeskind's crystal design. She fell silent and remained pensive for some time. "Strange," she finally offered.

Awesome and strange—that Libeskind's architecture has the power to excite wonder while simultaneously provoking criticism has been one of its greatest contributions to the city, Toronto the Good. Since the announcement of Libeskind's winning scheme for a ROM addition in 2002, the Lee-Chin Crystal has sparked a range of reactions—from unabashedly excited to less than



enthusiastic. The enthusiasts proclaim the Lee-Chin Crystal visionary and bold—it is exactly what Toronto and the ROM need to shake things up. The critics claim that its design is not original and lament its aggressiveness—that it overwhelms the heritage buildings.

Debate about the new building's originality exploded last October when the *National Post* ran a cover

story featuring Libeskind's superficially similar-looking Denver Art Museum (DAM) and the ROM expansion side by side. To be sure, the Lee-Chin Crystal flows out of a series of cultural projects Libeskind has designed: the Jewish Museum in Berlin, an un-built proposal for the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the War Museum in Manchester, UK, and the recently completed DAM. But in the realm of creativity, it is more common than rare for architects and artists to walk the line between innovation and repetition, refining a particular language of form and expression over time. Consider Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's TD Centre in Toronto—one in a series of corporate office buildings he built across North America. Or for that matter, the drip paintings of Jackson Pollock from the late 1940s, or the multitude of steel arc sculptures by Richard Serra. In the same way, Libeskind has evolved his own distinctive and personal language of diagonal and triangulated volumetric forms.

In this sense, the Lee-Chin Crystal is the same, yet different. It distinguishes itself in the trajectory of Libeskind works in that it more fully integrates and responds to the existing heritage buildings than any of his other projects. Although the DAM is an expansion of the original museum designed by Gio Ponti, Libeskind created a stand-alone building connected by a bridge—like an umbilical cord—to the original building. The DAM is an essay in extremes. Its front face conjures the assertiveness of the prow of a battleship or the form

of an anvil. It declares its separateness from anything around it other than the condominiums designed by Libeskind across the street, the jagged peaks of the Rocky Mountain Range in the distance, and, as Libeskind wrote: “the wide open faces of the people of Denver.”

As for its aggressiveness, while the ROM addition is also dominant and massive in its context, it is less forceful

than the DAM. It's easy to interpret this as Libeskind's nod to our more “polite” Torontonian nature. The architect has explained that his inspiration for the crystal building came from the ROM's mineralogy collection, but the steep ridges and white metal planes resonate with the silent monumentality of icebergs painted by Lawren Harris and the blasted walls of the Canadian Shield that frame Ontario's northern highways.

Inherently ambiguous, the building is at once aggressive and deferential, singular and additive, self-referential and responsive to its heritage buildings, commanding in its precinct while engaging its neighbouring institutions. Walk east along Bloor Street, for example, beginning from the Bata Shoe Museum, and continue past the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM) until you reach the ROM. Observe the relationships between these Bloor Street buildings—from the subtly tilted planes of Raymond Moriyama's elegant limestone “shoe box” for the Bata Shoe Museum, to the steeply pitched slate roofs of the RCM's magnificent Victorian heritage building, and on to the three interlocking prisms of the Lee-Chin Crystal that mark the new entrance to the ROM. A formal dialogue is activated between the buildings, like a stone skipping across the water. The southwest prism, perching like a pterodactyl on top of the heritage building, overlooks Philosophers' Walk. A new restaurant within its apex has a view—comparable to

BACKGROUND STREETSCAPES: BRIAN BOYLE. MAIN IMAGES: LEFT TO RIGHT: SAM JAVANROOH; JEFF SPEED (2X)



BRIAN BOYLE; ROM



The Royal Conservatory of Music



that from the roof terrace of the old Park Plaza Hotel on Bloor or from Scaramouche Restaurant on the St. Clair bluff—that forces an alternate perception of the city.

While its presence is certainly commanding, the Lee-Chin Crystal is also welcoming; the diagonal angles simultaneously project and recede on Bloor Street, startling and then embracing visitors to effectively draw them to the building and into its forecourt. The angled metal planes will capture and reflect light through the diurnal and seasonal rhythms of the sun, radiating a luminous aura over the streetscape.

And while the opposition of the shapes of the heritage museum and the new Lee-Chin Crystal are extreme, the precise juxtapositions and intersections generate a new and dynamic synergy. The illusion is that the Lee-Chin Crystal is like an iceberg crashing through the heritage buildings, but the reality, structurally, is that it barely touches the existing architecture. We assume it is pushing down on the heritage building masonry walls, but in fact it is resting lightly on and against them. It is an accomplishment on a par with the athleticism of Cirque du Soleil performers.

Inside, the expansive new view from the Hyacinth Gloria Chen Crystal Court forces a re-discovery of the historic building and a new appreciation for the heritage fabric. The 17th-century cabinet of curiosities, the ancestor of the modern museum, contained private collections of objects arranged in unexpected juxtapositions to enhance the unique qualities of each piece and to stimulate debate and conversation. The triangulated spaces of the Lee-Chin Crystal galleries have the potential to become the “curiosity chambers of the 21st century”—hybrids of galleries and editing suites in



BRIAN BOYLE ROM

which old and new intersect to posit new readings of history and culture. Will the unorthodox gallery spaces inspire the same awe and debate as the building’s outer architecture? Ideally curators and artists will embrace the challenge to imagine entirely new modes of presentation and exhibition.

It is this generation of new relationships of aesthetics with information that will realize ROM director

William Thorsell’s original vision—to bring wonder and excitement back to the museum. It will also sustain the debate on the city’s urban landscape that the new ROM building has sparked in Toronto’s design culture. The critical mass of what Thorsell has called the “international outlier” projects—Will Alsop’s Ontario College of Art and Design, Frank Gehry’s Art Gallery of Ontario, and Libeskind’s ROM—has energized that discourse. But it is the ROM, with its public mission, that has led the way in stimulating a lively debate among critics and the broader public.

At last, architecture and design are subjects of interest to the media and the public. This is one of the conditions that makes cities like Paris, Chicago, and Berlin vital: an engaged audience of critics and the public. A healthy city is an open city, one that can recognize and support creative local talent, while at the same time welcoming international participation. The greatest advances in Toronto’s architecture have occurred when the city has been open to external influences, and when its civic leaders and citizens have had the courage and vision to take risks, make bold moves, and challenge conventions.

The last time bold architecture by international architects energized the city was in the 1960s with Viljo Revell’s City Hall and Mies van der Rohe’s TD Centre.

The recent cultural renaissance has created the most important architectural moment in the city since that time. ROM



# THE DREAM LIFE OF TORONTO

BY ANDREW BLUM

**It challenges expectation and dismisses conventions, but can the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal be a monument that establishes Toronto's place in the world?**

**Places may seem like physical things,** but they come to life only when imbued with meaning and memories. And that's what thrills me about the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the ROM: more than just a museum of objects, it seems destined to become the leading repository of the dream life of Toronto. And not a moment too soon.

In 2001, not long before the ROM began its expansion project, I moved to Canada from New York—for love, and to study human geography at the University of Toronto. My academic focus was “sense of place,” which I soon found to be a very complicated thing. In the old formulation, a sense of place was most closely identified with traditional villages, where people share a history and build that history into the landscape with their homes and monuments. But my new city was proving itself to be a different kind of place altogether—seemingly bent on re-inventing the idea of cosmopolitanism.

As an American in Canada during those charged months after September 11, I felt this personally, as I faced what it meant to be a global citizen of a changed world. And I watched as the city faced it physically, as this current crop of architecturally ambitious public buildings, helped along by the Ontario SuperBuild Fund, brought that old question back to the fore about Toronto as a “world city.” With the release in the newspapers of each new set of architect’s renderings—wild squiggles and flying tabletops—the questions became clearer and the arguments in the press and at the dog park more tense: What is Toronto’s place in the world? What should the city become? And what does that have to do with architecture?

I knew what I thought—bring it on—but I never felt that I could be very convincing. As a New Yorker in Toronto, praising all this bombastic architecture only made it sound like I wanted to make Toronto into New York. And, in a way, I did. What I missed about New York was the sense that the city itself had a collective identity—a shared set of stories that tied together its disparate parts and its people. A “melting pot.” But Toronto defied cultural hegemony in both its people and its places. Often this was beautiful—and more humane, as people from everywhere could continue, in meaningful ways, to be from everywhere. In physical terms, that same quality defines Toronto in what has become a cliché—a “city of neighbourhoods.”

Maybe I was acting like a competitive American (or so I was told), but I wanted monuments—places that tied together all the other places, if only to celebrate their differences—exceptional places, ones that were better than all the rest, and exemplified the life of the city. At moments, the arrivals hall at Pearson International Airport, which compressed Toronto’s “global soul” into a single location, came close. But airports make bad public spaces; they are too controlled, too corporate, and too physically cut off from the rest of the city. Surely the CN Tower symbolizes Toronto (and it does seem fitting that a communications tower would stand for a city so connected to other places). But you can’t occupy it except for riding to the top, and when you’re in it it disappears from view—

which I suppose makes it a monument best admired from the comfort of your own neighbourhood. And Nathan Phillips Square may be the city's living-room, but (for now) it's a shabby one. Toronto is a far better city than that. But how would you prove it? Too often it seemed to me like a city of averages, hiding its jewels. Where does this place go to dream?

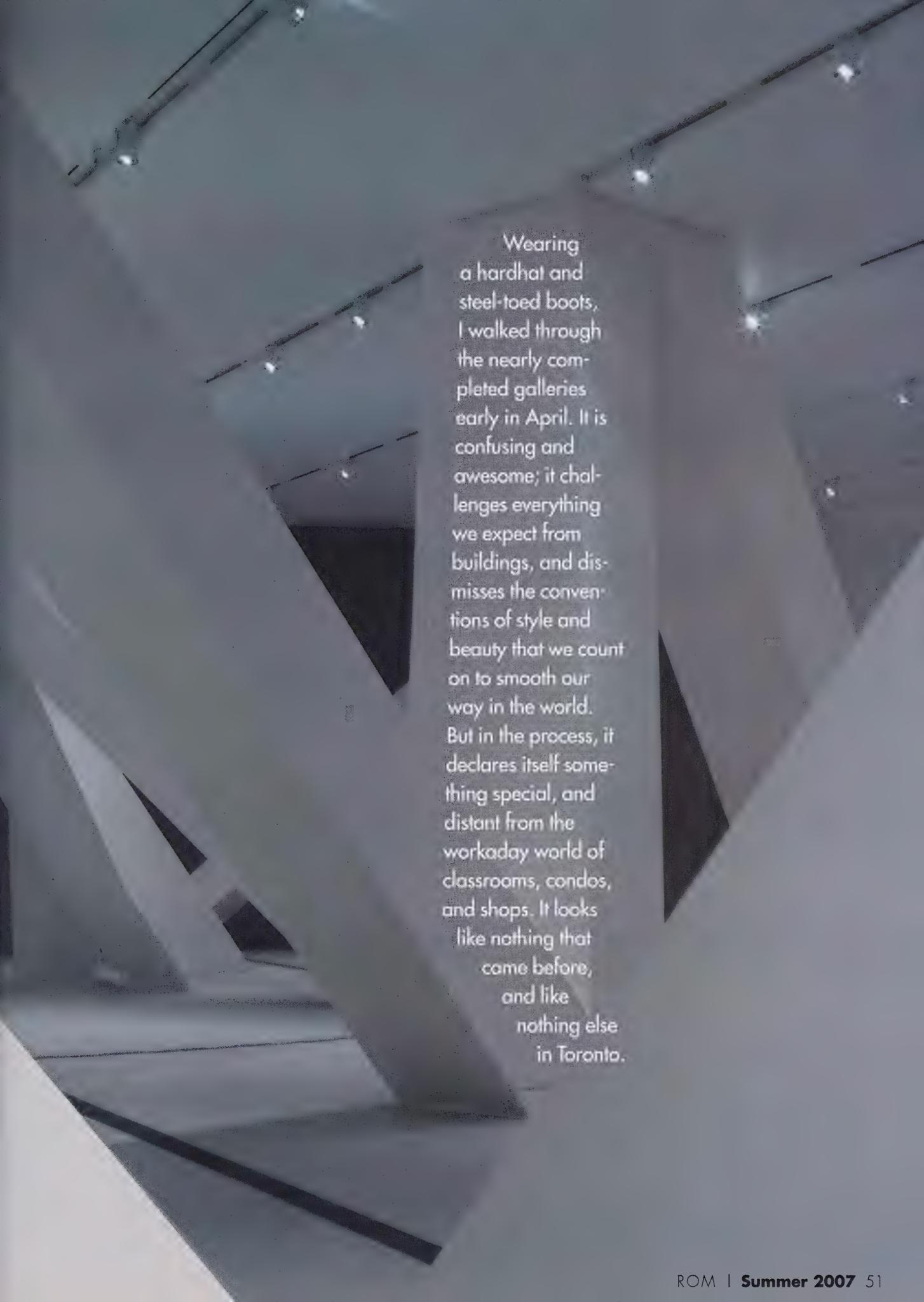
The exuberant plans to expand the ROM supplied an answer. More than an opera house, art school, stadium, or office building, a museum offers itself to everyone equally—particularly a museum of both culture and nature. A museum is a gift to the public life of the city. From architect Daniel Libeskind's very first rendering of a tilted glass trapezoid latched onto the historical ROM, it was clear this building was going to be special. I wasn't alone in wanting monuments. And it became even clearer over the years of construction, as a staggering spider web of steel rose up from behind the hoardings on Bloor Street. Of course there were also nay-sayers: I listened to functionalists tsk-tsk it all as waste—an insult to both the aesthetic and the economy of the modernist dictum that "less is more." But it made me kind of giddy. Toronto was good; Toronto was pleasant; but not until this building did it offer the inspiration that arises out of excess, out of the gratuitousness of imagination. A culture that produces a building like this—and a truly public one, not just one for rich people—strikes me as a culture that believes in limitless possibility. Libeskind has put this beautifully: "Architecture is a civic art, and a museum is not just a container to be filled with treasures; it is a place where people are brought to wonder about the spaces of their own futures."

Which, admittedly, is never an easy thing. Nor is this an easy building. Wearing a hardhat and steel-toed boots, I walked through the nearly completed galleries early in April. It is confusing and awesome; it challenges everything we expect from buildings, and dismisses the conventions of style and beauty that we count on to smooth our way in the world. But in the process, it declares itself something special, and distant from the workaday world of classrooms, condos, and shops. It looks like nothing that came before, and like nothing else in Toronto. It isn't entirely unique—Libeskind has also designed museums for Denver and Berlin that, at first glance, appear similar. But just as Gothic cathedrals all celebrate the same God, the twisting forms of each of these buildings respond to the same shared sense of modernity, arising out of the confusing nature of the world today. The Michael Lee-Chin Crystal is not about that old

sense of place—the one that dictated the European architectural styles of the ROM's earlier buildings. Yet more than most architects, Libeskind is driven by metaphor, by the "as if" of life: the possibilities of seeing one thing in another, of comparison, of poetry, of mixed feelings and ambiguity. Eight-year-olds—or anyone who maintains a childlike wonder at the world—will grasp this immediately. And it will stay with them. Architecture is an optimistic art.

Will it reinforce Toronto's identity as a "world city"? Don't tell the tourist office, but I don't think it matters. People from all over the world may come to see this building, but its real legacy will lie within the city itself. As with the glass pyramid in front of the Louvre in Paris, the shock of the new soon becomes a symbol of possibility and freedom of thought; what in our celebrity culture at first looks like a work of ego, later becomes a gift to the city. I asked Libeskind this, about how he thought this building stood for Toronto, and he responded with a story about the portrait Pablo Picasso painted of Gertrude Stein. When Picasso was done, an observer commented that it didn't look like her. "It will," Picasso said. Wayne Gretzky said it another way: "I skate to where the puck is going to be." "The Museum isn't to confirm everything we know about Toronto," Libeskind added. "It's to discover."

The first night I ever spent in Toronto, in the early spring of 1999, I was taken to a bar on College Street with a globe hanging above the door. The sidewalk outside was as alive as any I had seen in the world, and the narrow bar had the kind of dense ecstatic energy that is unique to cities. Afterwards, we walked around the corner, into the quiet, leafy streets. And I remember being shocked by the contrast, by the fact that someplace so alive could simultaneously be so pleasant—or "livable," as Torontonians like to say. Raised as a New Yorker, I realized on that first trip that I had never known a city so humane. I thought of this again walking through the ROM, and stepping from the old galleries into the new—from the reassuring squareness of the historic buildings, into the thrilling angles and crackling spaces of the new addition. The old and new buildings play off each other throughout the Museum, sometimes framing one another, sometimes colliding. But at certain points, the shift happens in a single step; you don't merely see it, but sense it in your footfall. The buildings are different volumes, different styles, from different eras, representing different histories. Like the city itself, they all connect—far more than they collide or coalesce. This building is a monument to that Toronto, and to its future. ROM



Wearing a hardhat and steel-toed boots, I walked through the nearly completed galleries early in April. It is confusing and awesome; it challenges everything we expect from buildings, and dismisses the conventions of style and beauty that we count on to smooth our way in the world. But in the process, it declares itself something special, and distant from the workaday world of classrooms, condos, and shops. It looks like nothing that came before, and like nothing else in Toronto.

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imagination at work



The Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the Royal Ontario Museum, looking east from street-level.  
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A newly planted tulip tree  
*Liriodendron tulipifera*  
in Queen's Park.

# Trees for Toronto

How the ROM is helping renew the city's urban forest and giving Queen's Park  
a breath of fresh air **Deborah Metsger and Gary LeBlanc**

**In cities**, losing trees to development is an ongoing problem. City trees—collectively called the urban forest—are important not just for their aesthetic value but for maintaining a healthy environment. Trees play a critical part in absorbing carbon dioxide from the air, reducing heat, and controlling storm-water runoff. One of the greatest challenges of responsible urban development is ensuring that the urban forest is valued and sustained.

In spring 2003, as the ROM began planning the new Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, it became apparent that eight relatively large trees would have

to be removed. Initially, plans were made to move the trees to a new location. But given their considerable size, their chances of surviving were deemed to be slim.

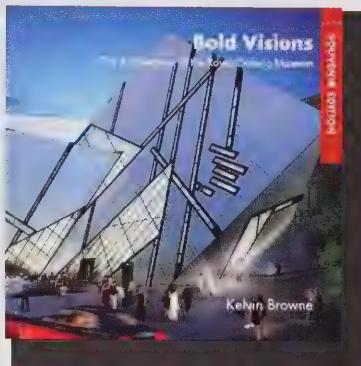
Unable to save the trees, the ROM together with the City of Toronto came up with an innovative alternative: replace the lost tree canopy elsewhere and use the ROM's unique expertise to promote awareness and stewardship of the urban forest. Called Trees for Toronto, the collaborative project with the City Forester's Office has a mandate to plant trees in nearby Queen's Park and establish a tree identification and

awareness program for the park.

Queen's Park is a small sector of the city's urban forest, but one with a rich natural and cultural history. It is situated on sandy sediments that were once the bottom of a lake more than 12,000 years ago. When Europeans first settled the town of York in the late 18th century, what is now the park was covered with groves of white pine and red and white oak. Taddle Creek ravine on its west side was rich with wildlife, its banks lined with pine and balsam.

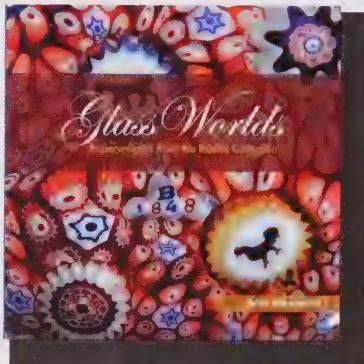
In 1828, a large tract of forest was purchased as a campus for the University of King's College, later to

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become the University of Toronto. But as the town grew and the city of Toronto was born, the need for public space became apparent. In 1859, U of T leased 49 acres of its land to the city to create a public park. University Park, as it was called, encompassed the current park, the Provincial Legislature site, and two narrow bands of land along University Avenue south to Queen and along College east to Yonge Street. On September 11, 1860, it was officially opened by Edward, the Prince of Wales, and renamed Queen's Park in honour of his mother, Queen Victoria. Though in 2007 Queen's Park is smaller and surrounded by busy traffic, it continues to serve as an oasis and favourite lunch spot in the city's centre.

In the summer of 2004 the Trees for Toronto project started with an assessment using the Neighbourwoods© protocol developed by two U of T Faculty of Forestry professors. The position and condition of 290 trees was recorded on a satellite image of the park. The survey found 47 different species and cultivated varieties in the park, including three butternut trees, which are listed as endangered today. While Queen's Park is quite species rich for its size, six species account for 54 percent of its trees—Norway maple, red oak, Austrian pine, European ash, little-leaved linden, and white cedar. Only a few individuals represent each of the remaining 41 species. As is true in most of the city, Norway maple, an introduced species, is the most abundant tree. It's not surprising. For many years it was standard practice to plant introduced species in urban settings—they are less susceptible to drought and pollution. Needless to say, this practice has changed, with emphasis

now placed on adding native species to the urban forest to restore natural ecosystems and create green corridors that can support native wildlife.

As for the condition of the trees, 86 percent were found to be in good to excellent health. Among the unhealthy ones, though, are some of the largest and oldest trees in the park, which will leave a large gap in the canopy when they die. Fortunately, the survey showed there is plenty of room to plant new trees.

In the spring of 2005, 36 native trees

were planted and this spring an additional 20 will be put in the ground, bringing the total to 56.

To help people identify the park's trees, plaques will be placed on at least one tree of each species giving its scientific and common name, its native origin, and an outline of its leaf. And this summer, interpretive signs

will be erected providing information on the Trees for Toronto project, the cultural and natural history of the park, Toronto's urban forest in general, and how to recognize different tree species through the seasons. Look for a Trees for Toronto Web page at [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca) this fall, which will provide more details and, eventually, links to interactive maps, identification tools, and materials for educators.

Trees for Toronto has rejuvenated interest in and stewardship of the grand old trees in Queen's Park. Hopefully the innovative program will serve as a model for the future.

Deborah Metsger is assistant curator of Botany in the ROM's Department of Natural History. Gary LeBlanc is an urban forestry planner for the City of Toronto.



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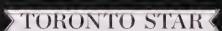
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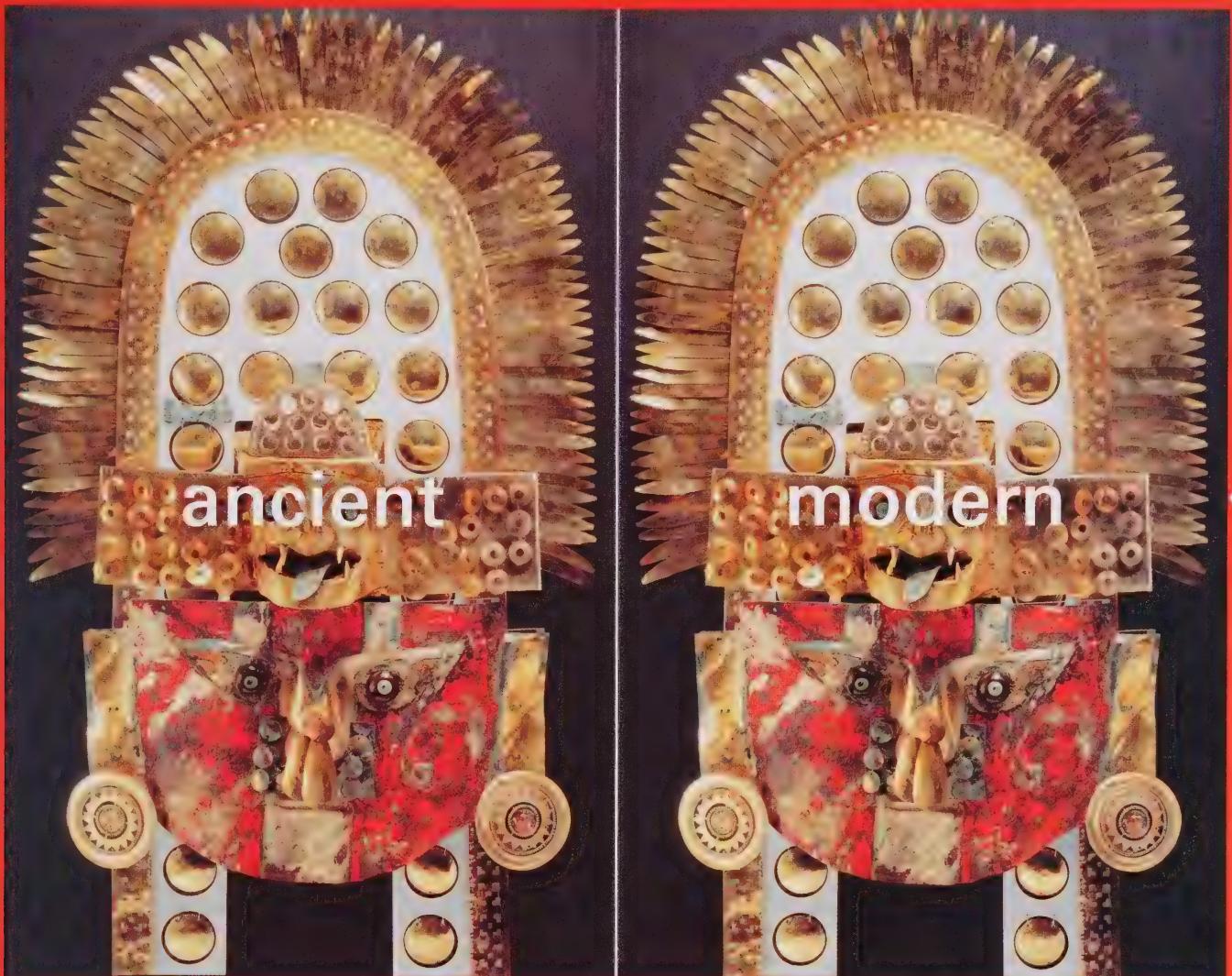


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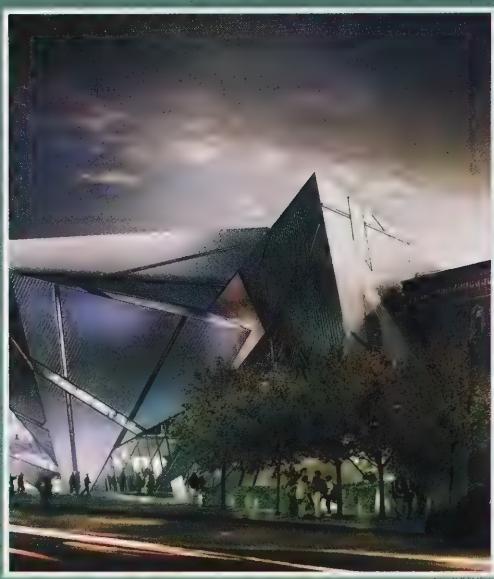
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# Bequest



## Ambrose's legacy

Ambrose Wah Hing Lo was proud of his cultural heritage and loved Chinese history, visual art, music, and opera. He would visit the ROM's Chinese collections to savour the serenity of the Buddhist temple wall paintings in the Bishop White Gallery of Chinese Temple Art. Ambrose died in 1999. In 2005, his partner created the **Ambrose Wah Hing Lo Endowment Fund** to support the acquisition of significant Chinese artifacts. Through this fund, Ambrose leaves a legacy of awe, and the hope that future generations will experience the same wonder he felt while gazing at the Chinese collections.



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(Rendering of) The Royal Ontario Museum's new addition, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, Miller Hare ©2007, Royal Ontario Museum. All rights reserved.

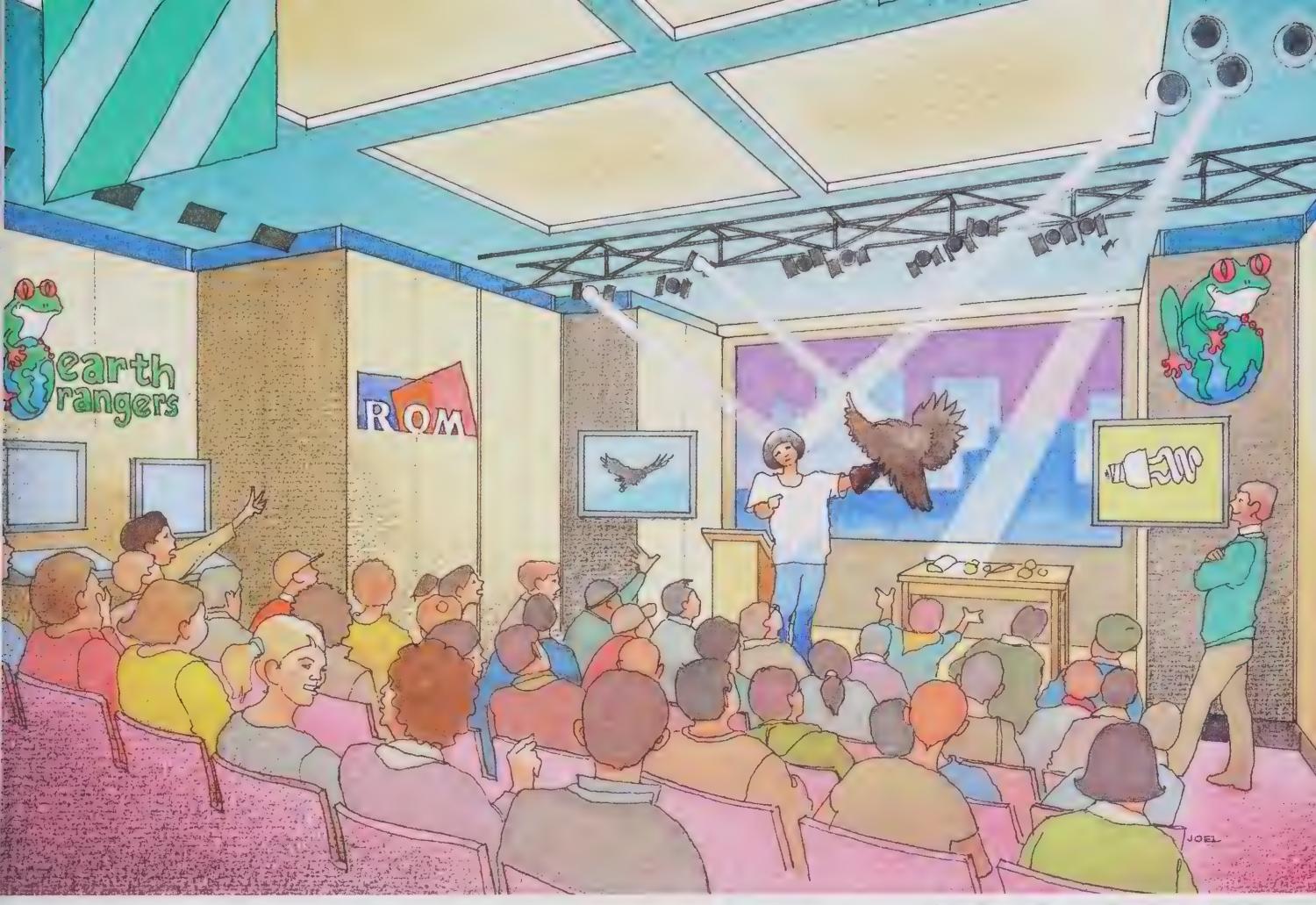
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With the unveiling of the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, the Royal Ontario Museum embarks on a bold new era. The University of Toronto is proud to be here for this historic transformation, as we have been since the beginning. For almost a century, the ROM and U of T have shared ground-breaking research and the professors who create it. Today, both are known the world over for their research and learning. So when Canadians want to understand the world, it's no wonder they turn to the ROM and U of T.



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Rendering of the Earth Rangers Studio at the ROM.

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# GALLERY OF THE AGE OF DINOSAURS



*James and Louise Temerty*  
PROUD PATRONS

Evening view of the entrance to the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal at the Royal Ontario Museum, looking east from the intersection of Bloor Street West and Queen's Park.

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*Edmontosaurus annectens*, Late Cretaceous. Red Deer River Valley, Alberta. ROM867.

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**NOVEMBER 1, 2007**

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Organized by the Department of Museum Volunteers and the European Curators of the Royal Ontario Museum as part of the new Thursday Night programming



## THE SINGULAR EVENT

1 June 2007

The Royal Ontario Museum thanks the following table hosts and patrons for their support of the gala fundraising dinner, The Singular Event, on Friday, June 1, 2007. This landmark evening launches the opening festivities celebrating the new ROM, and offers the first entrée into the spectacular Michael Lee-Chin Crystal. All proceeds go to the Renaissance ROM project.

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# The JOURNEY From THOUGHT to REALITY



Even the greatest accomplishments begin with just the seed of an idea. Fertilized by passion, energy and hard work, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal has burst forth from the existing ROM structure to become one of the most spectacular and unusual pieces of architecture in the world. Combining practicality with elegance, and futuristic with historical, this awe-inspiring and avant-garde structure has altered the face of Toronto.

Through our involvement with the ROM and its First Peoples' gallery, my family and I have enjoyed a front-row view of the Lee-Chin Crystal's development, and have watched with great pride and excitement as it evolved from the initial sketches to the finishing touches. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the ROM on the completion of this magnificent and inspirational project – a shining example of creativity and cultural achievement.

Robert Pierce  
*Partner, Stonegate Private Counsel LP*  
*Member of the Royal Ontario Museum Governors Board*

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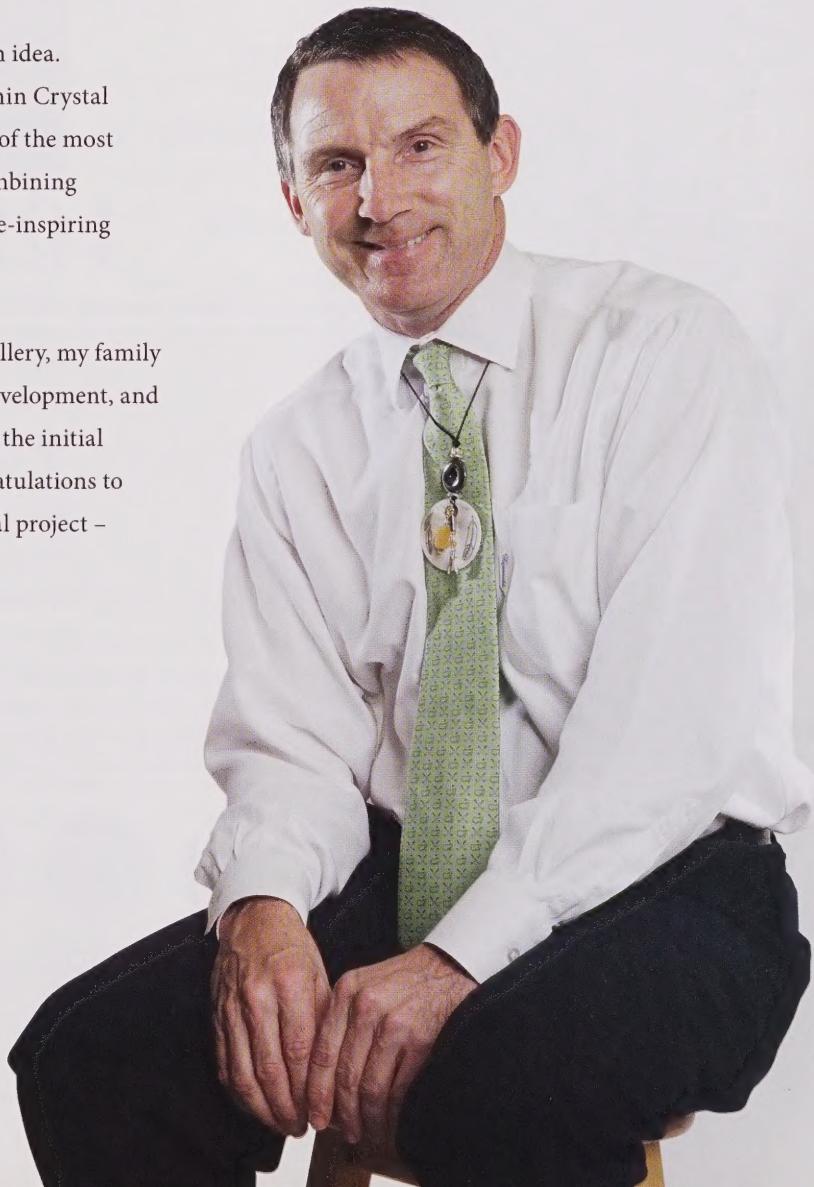
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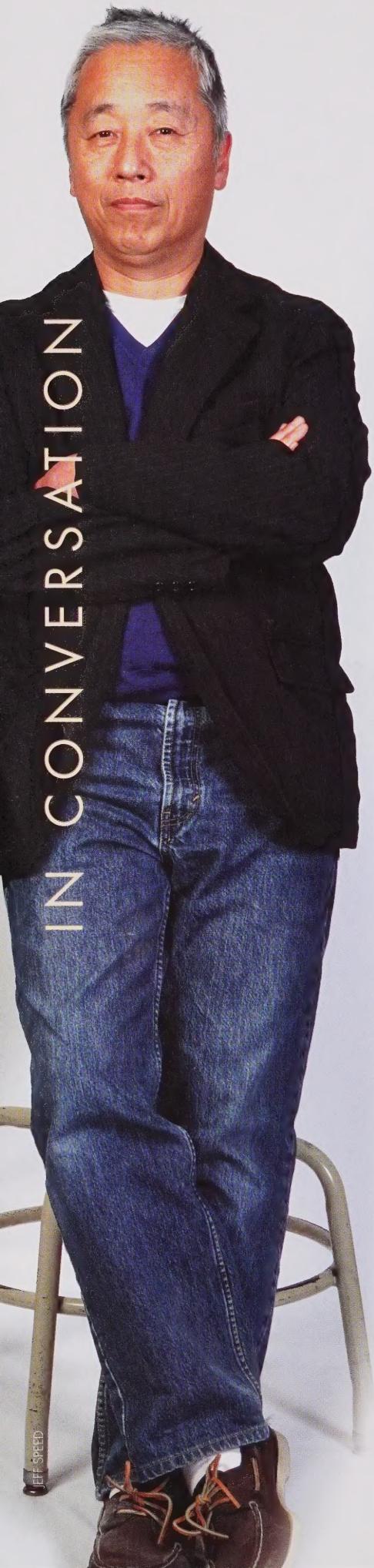
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(Rendering of) The Royal Ontario Museum's new addition, the Michael Lee-Chin Crystal, designed by Studio Daniel Libeskind with Bregman+Hamann Architects, a joint venture. Rendering: Miller Hare  
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Concept sketch for the ROM. Image: Studio Daniel Libeskind © 2006. All rights reserved.





Hiroshi Sugimoto

# Borrowing Beauty

Kelvin Browne, managing director of the Institute for Contemporary Culture at the ROM, speaks with Hiroshi Sugimoto about his exhibition *History of History*, now on view in the ICC's new gallery.

**Kelvin Browne:** *How did the idea for History of History come about?*

**Hiroshi Sugimoto:** History has always been on my mind. Photography is time-related—a visual image suggests a concept of time. It's quite inescapable. But my sense of time is not just a contemporary one. Early in my career I worked as an art dealer, mostly Japanese and East Asian art, and became immersed in history because of my contact with these objects. As well, because I collect European art, fossils, and other natural specimens, my sense of time has expanded as well as gained cultural complexity.

With collecting, you can become your own curator. I certainly did. Perhaps because of this my collecting became closely related to my own work, my photography. This is where the combining of objects I collect with my work began—it just happened. Both gain meaning from each other. It's this intermingling you see in *History of History*.

**KB:** *Why did you become interested in installing your exhibition in the new gallery Daniel Libeskind designed for the ICC at the ROM?*

**HS:** There seemed to be an immediate fit with Daniel's architecture. I think of his work as deconstruction; I thought of my exhibition (the installation as well as the artifacts) as a reconstruction of his deconstructed space. It's dialectic, a conversation. Daniel and I will speak to each other in the theatre when the exhibition opens but there will be another conversation, slightly different, that is the installation.

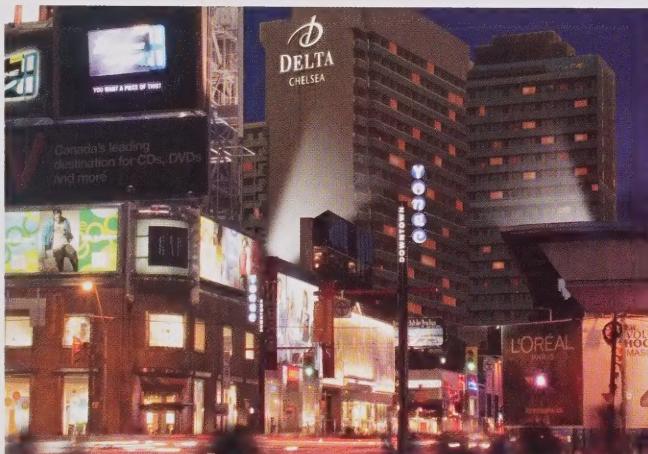
Another aspect of the architecture of the ICC's gallery intrigued me, too. The space is like a pyramid: the exhibition is history and time sealed inside that pyramid.

And there is an emotional fit. His work, and the ICC's gallery, changes from large to small and back depending on your perspective. Like time, it shifts and has dynamism, even though it is at the same time tranquil and still. The gallery felt right for *History of History*.

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